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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 7 July 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 7 juillet 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

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Wednesday 7 July 1993

The House met at 1333.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

UNEMPLOYMENT IN ST CATHARINES

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): With the concentration of attention on so-called social contract negotiations and legislation and fighting deficits, members of the Ontario Legislature should not forget about the plight of thousands of General Motors employees in St Catharines who face the tragic loss of their jobs and the disruption of their personal lives.

The announced closing of the General Motors St Catharines foundry and the discontinuation of one of the lines at the engine plant, together with the indefinite layoff of 750 men and women last year, will result in about 3,000 people joining the ranks of the unemployed in the Niagara region. The sale by GM of the axle plant could eliminate another 800 positions and mean that almost half of the jobs in the St Catharines General Motors operation could disappear.

I remind the Premier and the government of Ontario of the human tragedy for those directly affected and the economic devastation for St Catharines and the Niagara region of the approximately \$175-million loss of wages and salaries on a yearly basis.

Help us to find a buyer and operator for the excellent axle plant and seek out the very top officials of GM to encourage them to place massive new investments in St Catharines that will save the jobs and restore the community to the economic health it enjoyed for so many years. St Catharines, the Niagara region and those directly affected who may lose their jobs count on the Ontario government to help and to be of assistance.

GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): Last night a group of very concerned citizens, led by Dr John Wright, met in Owen Sound to discuss the implications of two very dangerous and destructive pieces of legislation: Bill 48, the Social Contract Act, and Bill 50, the Expenditure Control Plan Statute Law Amendment Act.

As it is written, Bill 48 will tear apart the collective bargaining process, which has been a fundamental right in this province for years. It clearly tells the broader public sector—our municipalities, universities, school boards, hospitals and conservation authorities—that they can no longer trust the provincial government and that all the deals they made in good faith with it are off. The people in my riding still cannot believe that any government, and certainly not a socialist government, would want to set such a far-reaching precedent.

Bill 50 is just as bad. It will completely destroy the health care system in Ontario, it will force doctors who

do not wish to leave to move outside the province and it tells new doctors who have trained here and whose roots are here they are not wanted. It will deprive patients of their right to choose the doctor they want and could easily deny vital medical services to those who need them most.

The people of Grey are angry and they are confused. They thought the NDP government would be a compassionate government, and now they see it picking their pockets while it tramples on their rights. They see that they are not consulted and their voices are not heard. They have finally learned the meaning of the word "undemocratic."

One of my constituents gave me something to give to the Premier. It is a hat which reads: "Hold your tongue. Democracy is dead in Ontario." In my view, it says it all, and I will deliver it to the Premier when he gets here.

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): Our country has just celebrated its birthday, and I'd like to rise today to acknowledge a birthday of sorts for some of my constituents who, in their eyes, are only seven days old, seven days into their lives as Canadian citizens.

Last Wednesday I had the privilege of attending a citizenship ceremony in Oshawa, where I witnessed 52 men, women and children who pledged their allegiance to our country. They vowed to be loyal, responsible citizens in their adopted country. They have not turned their backs on their homeland. They still have families and past lives there. Instead they're reaching out to their new country to grasp its language, customs, rights and responsibilities. They eagerly took Canada to heart, with all of its imperfections, and don't understand why other Canadians don't recognize how lucky we are here.

The enthusiasm in that courtyard was electrifying, the people from all over the globe speaking many different languages, all excited at the prospect of becoming Canadians.

I chatted with several of these proud new citizens. It was an auspicious occasion in their lives. They spoke of the hardship of their native countries and the courage it took to leave behind the only way of life they knew. They came to a new country, learned our languages, our ways and our system of government. Now they speak of the majesty of our land, the safety and security of our cities and the unshakeable belief that they were right in coming to Canada and then becoming Canadian citizens.

More than that, their patriotism shows in their expressions and humbles those of us who were born in this country and so often take it for granted.

PARAMEDIC SERVICES

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): The Minister of Health should be aware that the people of Ottawa-Carleton, unlike the people of Toronto, Hamilton, Oshawa and 50 other Canadian cities, do not have a paramedic emergency service.

In Ottawa-Carleton, our ambulance attendants have not been trained to give advanced life support. Consequently, they cannot start an IV, they cannot administer medication and they cannot intubate to help a victim breathe. All they can do in the case of a heart attack is defibrillate their patient. This is one of the important reasons why, in Ottawa-Carleton, we have one of North America's lowest survival rates for heart attack victims. In fact our survival rate is under 3% when it could be much closer to 30%.

The district health council has now endorsed a proposal to upgrade the training given to our ambulance attendants to make them full paramedics. This proposal has also received the unanimous support of all seven of our emergency department directors and the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians.

Through no fault of their own, our ambulance attendants in Ottawa-Carleton are, in the overwhelming majority of heart attack cases, simply delivering dead bodies to one of our emergency wards. This could easily be changed for the better if our ambulance officers were given paramedic skills.

Madam Minister, we're not asking for more ambulances, more attendants or even more equipment. We're simply asking for more training—training that will result in a huge payoff for heart attack victims in Ottawa-Carleton, as well as their families and friends.

1340

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): The NDP marked Seniors' Month in June this year by serving notice on the frail and elderly residents of nursing homes and homes for the aged that they would be hit by increases in their cost of living.

Seniors, many of whom are on fixed incomes, were devastated to learn that they will now have to pay extra amounts of up to \$12 per day or \$372 per month. The NDP has also inflicted additional stress on seniors in extended care homes and their families by creating anxiety over who will or won't be affected by the announced increases.

This year rent control increases of 4.9% were allowed by legislation for the general public. In a nursing home or home for the aged, increases of up to 32% are being imposed. When it comes to rent control, the NDP has all kinds of booklets that specify how it works and what the responsibilities of landlords are. That is, unless your landlord happens to be the NDP. In that case, and as seniors have found, the landlord forgoes responsibility.

As the PC advocate for seniors, I opposed and voted against Bill 101, the NDP long-term care legislation, because it delists extended care from OHIP and gives the green light for unilateral actions, such as this latest one, that further erode seniors' savings and rights.

Instead of living up to its funding promises with respect to long-term care for and in consultation with Ontario seniors, the NDP has become a sniper in the war it is waging on seniors' services. I call on the government to reconsider its actions and declare a ceasefire with respect to seniors living in nursing homes and homes for the aged. Otherwise, seniors will help ensure that the next provincial election will become the government's last battle.

TUG OF WAR CHAMPIONS

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): It is my pleasure today to bring to the House's attention the 100th anniversary of a great achievement by a handful of hardy men from Zorra township in my riding of Oxford.

Five farmers from Zorra—Alex Clark, Robert McLeod, Ira Hummason, William Munro and Bob McIntosh—travelled to the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 to take on the globe's best in a tug of war contest. Known far and wide as the Mighty Men of Zorra, they battled all comers on July 4 and came away as the world champions.

In the late 1800s, tug of war was a serious sport and was included in the early Olympic games. A tug of war team consisted of five pulling members and a non-pulling captain, whose function was to provide the strategy, while the rest of the team provided the raw power.

At the World's Fair, teams from around the world had been eliminated, setting the stage for a final showdown between the Zorras and an American team. In a best two out of three pulls, the Mighty Men of Zorra, captained by Ebenezer Sutherland—no relation—were victorious.

Two of my constituents, Eleanor and Ken Ovington, designed a set of commemorative coins. The Zorra Caledonian Society ordered more than 1,000 of these coins and offered them for sale to the public at the 56th annual Highland Games held in Embro on Canada Day.

On the front the coins show an 1890s tug of war competitor pulling a rope with an enlarged world tug of war championship cup in the background, with the names of the five champions.

The Mighty Men of Zorra were not only sporting champions but epitomized the very virtues that have made Ontario great: that ability to pull together to achieve a common goal.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Orillia): At 5:45 pm today, the final vote on Bill 48 will take place. As you know, Mr Speaker, I've been concerned about what the Conserva-

tive caucus was going to do throughout the social contract process.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): They are on side now.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mrs Caplan: First it was Mike Harris saying, "Bang, bang, bang." Then they supported it on second reading and Chris Stockwell said, "Bill 48 is Conservative philosophy."

Interjections.

Mrs Caplan: Then the Tories began to flip-flop, changing their position by the minute. But as late as last night I was worried, because the Tories voted in favour of so many sections of this bill—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs Caplan: —I was really concerned that they'd vote for it again on third reading.

I'm feeling better today. There is a rumour going around that the Conservative caucus will be voting against the social contract legislation. Lots of rumours go around this place—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Would you stop the clock, please? You can't? All right, I'll make sure there's enough time. There'll be enough time.

I ask the members to come to order. The member for Oriole has the floor. She has a right to make a statement and I ask the members to give her the appropriate respect.

Mrs Caplan: Shall I start again, Mr Speaker?

The Speaker: We have a technical difficulty with the clock. There was approximately 41 seconds. I will keep an eye on the clock, and the member for Oriole has the floor.

Mrs Caplan: As I said, there are a lot of rumours going around this place, but I hope this one is true. It sure took a lot to convince the Tories just what Bill 48 will do. The unions told them the bill was bad, bad, bad. The Metro board of trade told the Tories Bill 48 was bad, bad, bad. Many columnists and reporters told them Bill 48 was bad, bad, bad.

Perhaps it was my daily statements which have influenced them. I've been told by my constituents that they think these statements have been good, good, good.

However, most of all I believe—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order. The member for York Mills, come to order.

Mrs Caplan: —Mrs McLeod has done the most to convince them that the social contract legislation, Bill 48, is seriously flawed and has been from the beginning. It will not accomplish the government's goals.

In all seriousness, I hope the rumour is true and that the Tories will vote with us and against Bill 48 tonight. This legislation will have a detrimental effect on life in Ontario.

The interests of all Ontarians are in the defeat of this bill, and I hope that not only the Tories but members of the NDP will join us in defeating this disastrous piece of legislation.

HEALTH CARE

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): This government's notion that cabinet ministers and bureaucrats are equipped to make medical decisions is offensive and puts at risk the quality and accessibility of health care in Ontario.

The PC Party supports logical, responsible restraint initiatives but cannot support the NDP draconian legislation which will result in lower standards of health care in this province.

The social contract and expenditure control legislation, Bills 48 and 50, override almost all the OMA's agreements with government and impose massive cuts on medical services and patient care.

The legislation empowers the minister and the bureaucrats to make arbitrary decisions about how medical services will be delivered. The expanding power base of governments and bureaucrats fostered through this legislation is of grave concern. You are cutting physicians' incomes by 25%. Why not the 5% you're demanding from the others affected by this legislation?

Instead of dictating what services patients can receive and breaking agreements made in good faith, the government should be working with doctors to implement the OMA's concrete suggestions about how to reduce the costs of OHIP. Eliminating health card fraud should be the government's top priority.

A PC government will work with doctors to better manage medical services. The people of this province deserve no less.

To the doctors in York Mills who have expressed their concerns, I will work with you on solutions and continue to fight for excellence in our health care system.

GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): On Monday, June 21, East York council endorsed the Good Neighbours initiative and I'm pleased to announce that East York is now Metro's first Good Neighbours community.

Good Neighbours is a public awareness campaign of the Ministry of Citizenship, and it's aimed at encouraging people to reach out and help one another, especially those in need, those people who are frail or vulnerable or isolated. A Good Neighbour is anyone who is concerned about making the community a friendlier, safer place.

Participants in the East York Good Neighbours community include community associations, seniors' groups, the business community, health units, the police and other municipal and provincial government offices. In these difficult economic times, it's nice to know that the Good Neighbours concept makes use of existing resources and community goodwill.

I urge all members to go back to your own communities and to support the Good Neighbours initiative and to assist in establishing a good neighbours council. I also urge all residents to take the time to reach out to one another as good neighbours.

1350

**STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES
JUDICIAL REFORM**

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): It will give me great pleasure later today to introduce the Courts of Justice Statute Law Amendment Act, 1993.

This bill proposes to reform the Ontario Judicial Council, to enshrine in legislation the Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee, to provide for the gradual extension of the Unified Family Court, to provide a framework by which the salaries of Ontario judges will be set and to make a number of technical changes to the act.

The bill also makes consequential changes to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Justices of the Peace Act.

This bill proposes major changes to the composition, powers and procedures of the Ontario Judicial Council. This is the body responsible for investigating complaints against provincial judges. The changes are designed to create a more open, accessible, accountable and effective process for addressing complaints against provincial judges while respecting judicial independence.

Public representation on the council will be increased to improve the public's confidence in our judicial institutions while protecting judicial independence by maintaining peer review. As well, the proportion of provincial judges on the council will be increased.

The legislation introduces a fairer and more open process for considering complaints and gives the council a range of discipline powers so that it can respond more effectively and more appropriately where misconduct has occurred.

The council will publish information about its role in the justice system, provide assistance in filing complaints and complete an annual report setting out its activities over the year.

The legislation will also enable the chief judge to establish standards for judicial conduct and a program for judicial performance evaluations, and it will require the chief judge to establish a plan for judicial education. These reforms will give the Ontario judiciary additional

tools to continue their professional development and to maintain their high professional standards. This will help to ensure that Ontario's justice system remains one of the finest in the world.

This bill also enshrines in legislation the Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee begun under the previous government. This committee, which began five years ago, has met with great success. Composed in most part of non-lawyers, the Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee allows members of the public, lawyers and judges to use their collective expertise to recommend the finest candidates for the provincial judiciary.

The bill requires the Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee to develop criteria for judicial appointments that include considerations of professional excellence, community awareness, personal qualities and representativeness of the people of Ontario. The committee will be mandated to present a short list of candidates to the Attorney General, who will be permitted to recommend for appointment as judges only those persons who have been recommended by the committee.

In addition, the legislation provides for the gradual expansion of the Unified Family Court, which now exists only in Hamilton-Wentworth, to other locations within the province. This will provide full family law service in one court, providing better access and easier enforcement of support orders for the benefit of women, children and families generally. I would like to express my appreciation for the support of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, the Honourable Pierre Blais, and his officials for working in partnership with us to make the Unified Family Court possible.

The Unified Family Court will be established as a new, superior court called the Ontario Court (Family Division), equal in all respects to the Ontario Court (General Division). It will consist of full-time specialist judges with complete family law jurisdiction, supplemented by judges rotating in from the General Division. In the first year, we expect that the new Family Division will begin operation in two or three centres, in addition to Hamilton-Wentworth.

The new Ontario Court (Family Division) will pave the way for a more efficient and more economical family court system in Ontario, committed to the maintenance of local service in existing family court centres.

The bill also contains the framework by which the salaries of provincial judges will be set, commencing in 1995. However, I will note here that the provincial judiciary have offered and have signed an agreement with the government that provides for a compensation freeze for three years and for up to 3,000 additional sitting days during that period. This is based on approximately 12 sitting days per judge per year.

The bill also makes a number of other technical amendments to the Courts of Justice Act which are designed to improve the management and the operation of the courts of Ontario.

Each of these initiatives reflects the government's commitment to making the justice system more accessible, more responsive and more equitable.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Responses? The official opposition, the member for Ottawa West.

Mr Robert Chiarelli (Ottawa West): I'm not sure the minister to date has grasped the extent of reform needed for the justice system in Ontario. The legal profession, the judiciary, and indeed the broad public are crying out for fundamental reform and broad-based reform.

Minister, your top priority is to create a strongly independent judiciary, delivering speedy and affordable access to justice. While some improvements have been made on the criminal side in the recent past, speedy and affordable access to justice on the civil side is not at an acceptable level.

The initiative on the uniform family court is welcome. This legislation was enacted by Ian Scott in 1989 in anticipation of some speedy implementation. Communities from across the province have been urging and lobbying you to implement a uniform family court in their various communities, including the community of Ottawa-Carleton. As you know, the Ottawa-Carleton area, as well as others, has lobbied strongly to have a uniform family court. It will in fact enhance access to justice, in many cases for women, and it will make justice more affordable and more speedy.

What is very depressing about your announcement today is that you're merely indicating it's going to be gradual. This is a significant issue that needs to be fast-tracked immediately. You know that every part of the province has urged you to do that. You know that you have the means to do it by readjusting your own budgets internally. I urge you to consider fast-tracking the uniform family court in every section of the province.

Your other announcements today, Minister, do not touch the basic needs of reforming the justice system. Indeed, your reforms of the Ontario Judicial Council are improvements but do not fundamentally affect large numbers of the public who need better access to justice.

We have now a very competent, professional judiciary. There are not a lot of complaints that are filed. I agree with you that improvements in the complaints system are in order, and I compliment you to the extent that you have done that today. But a major initiative in the area of alternative dispute resolution on the civil side is long overdue and would have been welcomed by this critic, the legal profession and the public.

I wish, Minister, you would brush off the committee

report of the standing committee on administration of justice which was tabled in this House in 1990 dealing with alternative dispute resolution. The best legal minds in the country came to this building and recommended how to implement alternative dispute resolution, and this government has done precious little in that area, one of the basic areas crying out for reform. I urge you to dust off that report, read it and try to fast-track some of the alternative dispute resolution techniques that are much needed.

The announcement with respect to the Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee simply confirms an existing process, initiated again by Attorney General Ian Scott; indeed, a process abused by your government when the former Attorney General appointed a nominated NDP federal candidate to chair what's supposed to be a non-partisan, non-political body to help appoint judges.

1400

With respect to the memorandum signed with the chief judge of the Ontario court which you announced previously today, this is a far cry from the reform initiatives recommended by the Joint Committee on Court Reform. I urge the minister to seriously look at the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Court Reform, which would create a true partnership between the judiciary and the Ministry of the Attorney General, something that is long overdue and which has been tried successfully in many other jurisdictions.

I want to leave one thought with the minister. Several months ago, I surveyed some 55 questions to 2,500 lawyers across the province. Overwhelmingly, the response was as a high priority that these practising lawyers felt they could not effect justice on behalf of their clients.

This is bringing the justice system into disrepute. You must look at fundamental reform of the judicial system, the administration of justice in the province of Ontario, because the judiciary, the legal practitioners and the public are not happy with what's happening now.

And while you're looking at administration, giving more power to the judges, perhaps you might consider giving them responsibility for the family support plan, because your ministry is so botching that area and the complaints are so widespread that somebody has to take charge and improve the system.

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): I've read with interest the statement that the Attorney General has just made. I have to say it's interesting, I applaud the efforts, but it's not new. We've been hearing about these initiatives for a long time. Many of them have been informally in place for a long time.

The Ontario Judicial Council recommendations are the same recommendations, almost entirely, as the Canadian Bar Association.—Ontario recommended a

long time ago. The judicial appointments and the passing of scrutiny have been going on at the federal level for a long time. They've been going on in Ontario for five years. They were initiated by the former Liberal Attorney General, Mr Scott. Now what is happening is that these will be judicially recognized. I applaud that. It's not new, but it's the right thing to do.

The Unified Family Court project started 16 years ago in the province of Ontario. I believe it began in 1977 as a pilot project. For the last eight years, between the NDP and the Liberals, we kept hearing that this was a good pilot project and that it was going to be become a fully recognized court in Ontario. Well, it's finally going to happen, and I applaud the Attorney General for that. It's not new. It's taken a long time. It shouldn't have taken this long.

But the interesting thing about this statement is what it doesn't have in it. The most important thing that I saw from the briefing that the Attorney General was kind enough to provide us with is a memorandum of understanding between the Attorney General and the chief judge of the Ontario Court (Provincial Division). To me, that is the most significant aspect of this particular announcement, because it's finally recognizing that there is too much power in the hands of the Attorney General and that the power has to be given back to the people who use the courts. It can't be in the hands of the biggest litigator, who is the Attorney General; the process has got to be run by the judges and by the system that they will operate and that they will own. That is why what isn't in this statement—and I'm surprised, because this is where the Attorney General could really have taken a bow today. This is something that has been recommended in the Joint Committee on Court Reform and it's been with the Attorney General for a year now.

I hope the Attorney General will take this report and expand what she's now done to the federal level of courts in terms of the budgetary aspects that she controls.

I hope also that the Attorney General will take her name off the front door of every courthouse in this province, because the Attorney General is a litigant in those courthouses; the Attorney General does not run the judicial process. Please, take your name off the courthouse door of every court in this province.

The other thing I say to the Attorney General is that while I applaud the memorandum of understanding, there was a very interesting article in the *Globe and Mail* on June 9 which quotes Mr Justice David Marshall. Justice Marshall is very concerned that the chief judges will ultimately wield inordinate power and that that can be, in terms of the bench, a loss of independence for the other judges on the bench. It's a very important concept, and what he says is: "The attribution of more and more power to chief judges may well have

the effect of making the judicial ideology of the chief judge the only truly independent ideology on the court."

I say to the Attorney General, read this article and take a look at the recommendations that are made. One of those recommendations is that the chief judge should only be appointed for a limited period of time so that his power does not become so inordinate that it affects the judicial independence of other members of the bench.

I think the most important thing the Attorney General has done today is the thing she didn't want to talk about. I don't know why. I wish she would have, because that's where I think she really has done something extremely significant. I hope she extends it as per the report of the Joint Committee on Court Reform dated June 30, 1992.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): It is now time for oral questions; the honourable member for Bruce.

Applause.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Well, thank you very much.

Today the social contract, in the guise of Bill 48, hangs like a shroud over the province of Ontario and people all across the province wait with bated breath to see what next will happen with this so-called initiative by this government.

I have a question for the Finance minister. How we used to like him when he was just the plain, ordinary, everyday Treasurer, but now the Finance minister has taken on the guise of the Michael Wilson of Toronto. He is the one who is examining ways of taking apart the sacred trust that all of the people of this province have come to love and enjoy.

It has for the last several weeks been our duties to follow with interest the developments under Bill 48. Yesterday, on the very moment when committee of the whole was about to finish its deliberations on Bill 48, another batch of amendments were dropped on the table. One of those extended the deadline for entering into contractual relations, in sectors and otherwise, until March 1, 1994.

Can I ask the Treasurer, the Finance minister now, why they have extended the time period from, once, in May till June, till August, till August 10 and now back into March 1994? Is it because you know that your Bill 48 is so fundamentally flawed that it has no hope at all of working?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): Mr Speaker, the member used some unparliamentary language in his preamble, but I will ignore that.

Mr Elston: What?

Hon Mr Laughren: "Michael Wilson."

The member for Bruce is obviously misinterpreting the amendments that were introduced yesterday and debated yesterday afternoon and then passed, some of them unanimously, I might add. What the member should understand is that what we did was say that the fail-safe is still August 1 for agreements for the 1993-94 fiscal year. If after August 1 there are still some sectors and local arrangements that have not come to a voluntary agreement by the deadline of August 1, then they are under the fail-safe provisions for this fiscal year.

If between now and next spring they are able to reach a sectoral agreement for the next two years, why wouldn't we make that allowance if we can come up with a voluntary agreement along with our social partners out there that perhaps would end up being a better arrangement for everyone concerned: the public, the workers themselves, the government, the social agencies? Why wouldn't we extend that? Because they are not exempt from the provisions of the fail-safe mechanism contained in Bill 48 for the fiscal year 1993-94, and the targets still must be met.

1410

Mr Elston: When you examine Bill 48 and all of the amendments—some 29 amendments have been introduced by the government to this bill affecting some 90 parts of the act—it seems to me that he has already admitted that Bill 48 is fundamentally flawed and cannot work. He is telling us that none of his deadlines are going to be effective.

How can the Minister of Finance tell us that his legislation, Bill 48, supported initially by the Tories, was going to work and save him the money when basically all it is doing is sweeping the problem under the rug for three years, when it will all again resurface? Will the Finance minister tell us why he is sweeping all our fiscal problems under the rug until 1996?

Hon Mr Laughren: I'm somewhat puzzled by the new Liberal position, which appears to be that the fail-safe mechanism contained in the bill must be in place for the full three years and that there should be no negotiations on any new sectoral arrangements for the two subsequent years. I would remind the member that nothing has changed on the savings targets that must be achieved; nothing has changed whatsoever. For 1993-94, the savings must be realized. For 1994-95 and 1995-96, the savings must be realized. All we've done was introduce an element—

Mr Elston: You pushed it back.

Hon Mr Laughren: We're not pushing anything back. We simply introduced an element of flexibility that says that if no agreement was reached by August 1, then 1993-94 savings are locked in as contained in Bill 48. If, on the other hand, after August 1 they wish to come to an arrangement, having lived under the fail-safe

mechanism for a number of months, if they wish to take advantage of the lower targets, for example, for those subsequent two years, then I think they should have a right to do that.

There is nothing in this bill that pushes any savings off into the future whatsoever, nothing in the amendments that we introduced yesterday—nothing.

Mr Elston: The Finance minister talks about how well his legislation is working. We understand that OPSEU has risen from the table, not to return to enter negotiations again; there's something the Finance minister should have been making a statement on. Anyway, OPSEU has walked from the table. They don't want to deal with this government, they don't want to deal with what is not a fail-safe mechanism but a fail-fail mechanism. This whole piece of legislation is so fundamentally flawed that it has no chance of success, because you've really never, as Fred Upshaw said, negotiated in good faith with anybody. You have gone through a whole series of public posturings for political purposes, and that's it.

If these people had followed the advice of our leader, Lyn McLeod, and had actually set their targets and let the local people, both employer and employee, negotiate to those targets, this thing could have succeeded and it could have been a success. What they have done is politically charged this whole discussion so that it was bound to fail.

Can this Finance minister do something right and be spot on and withdraw Bill 48?

Hon Mr Laughren: First of all, there is absolutely nothing to prevent agreements being reached at the local level; absolutely nothing. For the member for Bruce to say that it's not bargaining in good faith to bargain for four months is beyond my comprehension. There's absolutely nothing to prevent it from working.

The member is correct when he says that OPSEU walked away from the table this morning. That's true. I regret that, because by walking away from the table they've walked away from a lower target consisting of about \$31 million difference. That represents about 600 jobs; the lower target, if a sectoral agreement were reached, would have preserved about 600 jobs that now will not be preserved if OPSEU does not come back to the table. I very much hope they will. We're open to negotiate right through until the end of July.

I would say to the member for Bruce that, for the benefit of the public sector employees in this province, the sooner they come back to the table in order to protect those 600 jobs that could be realized through the lower target that the Ontario public service must meet, the better we'll all be.

DRUG BENEFITS

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I know the Minister of Health is here and that the House leader has gone to

get her, but in her absence, at least temporarily, I'll address my question to the Deputy Premier. Mr Deputy Premier and Finance minister, your Health minister released a consultation paper on the Ontario drug benefit program just a short time ago. Thankfully, she's here, because we'll now get an answer.

When the consultation paper on the Ontario drug benefit plan was released, it was released with a fanfare that indicated there would be consultation till September 30 of this year and that she would be expecting to get some good advice, but it was preceded by Bill 29 by about a month, in which the minister herself took unto herself unilateral power to cut back the ODB, to prescribe, almost, what could be taken and not taken by seniors in this province and other users of the Ontario drug benefit plan, and to tell us in fact whether or not they were going to be paying user fees.

I want the minister to tell us today what amount of user fees she has determined the seniors will be paying and how many benefits are going to be removed from the ODB that have to this point been able to protect seniors against disease.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm sure the member for Bruce is aware that in the budget of this spring the Minister of Finance indicated that there would be cost-sharing with respect to the Ontario drug benefit plan. Bill 29, which is the omnibus piece of legislation introduced in order to enable the government to reach its expenditure reduction targets, in fact provides the power to do that.

As the member has said, we have released a consultation paper making it very clear that what we would like to do is extend eligibility for ODB, but that in order to do that and at the same time to contain the costs of the program, we will be looking at some way of cost-sharing. In response to his specific question, no determination has been made as to the amount or to the limits or to the mechanism by which that would be effected.

Mr Elston: Well, this is the Drug Benefit Formulary. This is the book in which all of the medications which are paid for under the ODB are contained. Not long ago, some 230 of those drugs that previously existed in the ODB were removed by the Ministry of Health, and the minister of the day didn't have the extensive powers that are contained in Bill 29 with respect to the ODB.

Can the Minister of Health tell us, now that they've started tearing apart the Drug Benefit Formulary, what amount the user fees are going to be, from what amount to what other amount, if you want to give us a range, so that the seniors can anticipate how much money they are going to pay to participate in the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary?

Hon Mrs Grier: I'm sure the member for Bruce has had by now an opportunity to review the consultation

paper that I released a couple of weeks ago, a consultation paper which talks broadly about the policies of the government, the Ministry of Health and the Ontario drug benefit plan, which speaks to the fact that over the last number of years, the increase in the cost of that program has been going up by 16%, and which also speaks to the very real concern that not only seniors but everyone in this province has had over time about inappropriate prescribing of drugs, about the fact that we cannot assure anyone—

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): Come on, Ruth. Tell us the number. You know what the number is. Tell us the number.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Oriole.

Mrs Caplan: There's nothing about quality, Ruth.

The Speaker: Would the member for Oriole please come to order.

Hon Mrs Grier: —that in fact the best quality of prescribing and prescription and sale of pharmaceuticals is what we have under that plan. The discussion paper talks about all of those issues.

With respect to the element of cost-sharing, let me say again to the member that there have been no conclusions reached as to how it would work and how much it would require. We think that if we are to expand the program as well as contain the costs, it will be necessary for pharmacists, manufacturers—

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Mrs Grier: —and beneficiaries to share in the costs of the program, but we want to consult with all of the people affected before we come to a final conclusion.

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Mr Elston: The minister confirmed in her first answer that this is part of a budgetary plan. They know what the amount of money is that they are after. They know what the amount of drug costs is. They know how many seniors are enrolled in the plan. They know so many details, it is beyond belief that she doesn't have a clue as to the range of the user fee prices they are considering.

This is her plan, this is her government's plan. Whatever you want to call them, sharing costs, partnership fees or user fees, which of course is what Finance Minister Michael Wilson in Ottawa used to call them, it's what other Tories call them, why don't you come clean and tell us? How much money are you looking for from the senior citizens of this province to share the cost of the Ontario drug benefit plan? What is the price of your user fee for the province of Ontario?

Hon Mrs Grier: We have a plan. We have the only drug benefit plan in the country where in fact none of the beneficiaries share in the cost of that program.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mrs Grier: I'm surprised that the members find the fact that we have the Ontario drug benefit plan so amusing. It's a plan that's been in place for a very long time. It's a plan that has served the people of this province well, but it is a plan that has only served a limited segment of the population of this province. It's universal if you're over 65 or if you're on social assistance, but I would ask the member to listen to the questions that a member of his caucus has raised with me about the fact that there are many people in this province who don't benefit from our drug benefit plan. There are two million people who have no coverage for their drug benefits and there are people suffering from catastrophic diseases who have no assistance from our drug benefit plan in order to meet their needs.

The consultation paper we have released speaks to those issues, speaks to the recommendations of the Lowy commission about looking at better prescribing guidelines, about managing the plan better and about everyone who benefits from the plan, manufacturers, pharmacists and consumers, in sharing more fairly in the cost of the plan. That's what our consultation is about, and I hope the member opposite, who is very familiar with both the benefits and the limitations of the Ontario drug benefit plan, will take a more constructive attitude to the consultation as a result of reading the consultation paper.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): My question is to the Deputy Premier. From day one, unlike the Liberal Party, our caucus supported the principle of restraint. We made it clear from the outset that Bill 48 needed some serious changes to ensure fair and permanent restructuring of government in the province of Ontario. That is why we put forward 29 significant amendments last evening, but the government used its majority, with the Liberals following along behind, as they did in 1985, to vote down every single one of those amendments.

It is clear that despite all the rhetoric, you had no intention of considering the merits of the amendments at all. You had absolutely no intent of doing that whatsoever. Instead of playing the old-style politics and developing a fair and workable piece of legislation, if this was your intention all along, why did you go through the charade of last evening in committee of the whole on the bill?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): I don't believe in playing the old-style politics. It's obvious it didn't work for the Liberals so I wouldn't want to do that. But I would remind the House leader for the Conservative caucus that if anybody played the old-style politics, it was his caucus when it pretended, by voting for the bill on second

reading, that it was going to support it on third reading. They never had any intention of doing that. That's the oldest political trick in the world. Nobody believed that you were going to vote for it on third reading, not from day one.

Mr Eves: The Deputy Premier has been a member of this Legislature longer than I believe anybody else in here and he, above anybody, should know what second reading of a bill is, that is a vote in principle, and what third reading of a bill is. Many of the amendments that we introduced yesterday and the day before were not just supported by our caucus. They were drafted on the advice of many of the transfer partners. They were put forward on behalf of the men and women who will have to make the legislation work in the province of Ontario.

Now I can understand why you would vote together with the Liberal Party to defeat the amendments; that's partisan politics. But why would you play partisan politics at the expense of hospitals, school boards and municipalities by voting against their amendments to this legislation?

Hon Mr Laughren: I am pleased to know that the Conservative caucus sat down with Mr Ryan as it developed its set of amendments. But I find that a bit hard to believe because I'll give you an example of why we rejected the amendments brought forth by the Conservative caucus. There was one amendment that would remove the words "fair and equitable" from the bill.

Now, I ask you, how could we in good conscience accept that kind of amendment? Secondly—

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): We want a definition of these words.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. The member for Simcoe West, come to order.

Mr Jim Wilson: I want to know what he meant by it.

The Speaker: The member for Simcoe West is to come to order.

Interjection.

The Speaker: I will caution the member for Simcoe West. He is to come to order. Minister.

Hon Mr Laughren: I think I owe an apology to the Conservative caucus. I didn't realize they didn't know what the words "fair and equitable" meant. I appreciate the fact that's an error in judgement on my part, but if I had realized that at the time the amendment was brought before us, I perhaps would have given an explanation of what "fair and equitable" meant in the way we intend to treat our employees in this province, namely, in a fair and equitable manner.

I'll just give you another example of why we rejected their amendments: They would not take into consideration the low-income cutoff of \$30,000. I think that's an

example of the way in which we are being fair and equitable as opposed to the way the Tories would treat the employees in this province.

Mr Eves: The minister knows that calling something fair and equitable doesn't make it fair and equitable. Calling a chipmunk an elephant doesn't make a chipmunk an elephant either.

The Ontario Medical Association, the Ontario Hospital Association, the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto, many boards of education, police services boards and municipalities were instrumental in drafting many of our amendments that we put forward. The fact that you dismissed them out of hand is an insult to those transfer partners; not to us, to them.

The amendments introduced on their behalf would have made the legislation more fair and more workable. Now we're left with a bill that is not only difficult for transfer partners to implement right now, but may well lead to some very serious ramifications in three years' time. Why have you left your transfer partners holding the bag?

1430

Hon Mr Laughren: I would deny that accusation, but I must say I was struck by the fact that of the organizations the member for Parry Sound listed that he consulted, the only union in the group he consulted was the Ontario Medical Association. I think that if we're going to have amendments that are fair and equitable, you have to do more than that. That's what we've done. Our amendments made the legislation more fair, more equitable than the original draft was.

I conclude by saying that we did look at every one of the Conservative caucus amendments very, very carefully, because I really was attempting to reach out and find an amendment or two, or three or four, that wouldn't either contradict the principle of the bill or do something, what I think would be irresponsible, like take words "fair and equitable" out of the bill or remove the low-income cutoff. I think that's not the purpose of this bill. The purpose of this bill is to achieve compensation savings in the public sector in a fair and equitable manner in a way that protects jobs and services all across the province.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Surprise, surprise.

On Monday, the Premier confirmed that the Ontario government has a ban on the purchase of supplies, equipment and services from South Africa. Why did your casino project team, then, meet with Sun International of South Africa on two separate occasions?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): Yes, indeed, the Premier did confirm our ban and our abhorrence of the policies in

South Africa, but that policy was not by any means broken. No business was conducted, no contracts signed. The casino team met briefly with this company—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for York Centre, please come to order.

Hon Ms Churley: In fact, it's my understanding that when they first met, on the request from a local Toronto consultant, the casino team was unaware even that this company had holdings in South Africa. They were told in no uncertain terms in the meetings of Ontario's policy. In fact, they have not placed a bid on the casino and we will not be conducting any business with them.

Mr Eves: Your team met with them, not once but on two separate occasions. You were quoted as saying that officials ended discussions once the South African link was discovered. According to officials from both your casino project team and Sun International Ltd, the company did not pursue the casino project team because it decided it was no longer interested for business reasons. In fact, Sun officials told us by telephone this morning that they were not even aware of your government's policy on South Africa until this morning, when we told them about it.

Why did you say the casino project team cut off negotiations once it found out about the South African connection when that simply is not true?

Hon Ms Churley: I have spoken to the members of my project team who met with this group, and they have told me very clearly that in a meeting they expressed, and told them quite clearly of Ontario's policies around South Africa. That was made extremely clear to them in a meeting. Whether they decided to pursue it or not on the basis of that, I don't know, but I can clearly tell you that had they put in a bid, for obvious reasons because of our policy we would not be accepting that bid. It's as simple as that.

Mr Eves: Somebody is not telling the truth here. Bill Gillies, the director of communications and consultations for the casino project team—he works for the minister—told our researchers that Sun International simply decided to no longer pursue this. You didn't obviously inform him of this policy before he sat down to talk to them. You didn't inform the Premier, who was totally unaware that these negotiations took place when he answered the question on Monday. You did not break off discussions with Sun International. They in fact broke off negotiations with you. You did not tell that company about your South African policy. They didn't know about it until this morning, and you didn't tell the media the truth. Why?

Hon Ms Churley: The member is, I think, misrepresenting the facts, and he should be very careful. He should listen carefully now, because there were no negotiations—

Mr Eves: I think you have, and that is the problem. You'd better phone the CEO of Sun International.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Ms Churley: I would prefer that the member listen to the answer to this question, because it's important. There were no negotiations conducted with this company. There was no business deal made with this company. The casino team, at the very beginning of the process—

Mr Eves: No discussions? What were they talking about? They weren't talking about submitting a proposal on your casino project in Windsor?

Interjections.

Hon Ms Churley: You're not listening to me.

The casino team, at the beginning of the process, met with—

Interjections.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): I recommend a two-day recess, sir.

The Speaker: We'll blame it on the warm weather. Has the minister completed her response?

Hon Ms Churley: No, I haven't concluded my remarks. Just to finish up, no policy of the Ontario government was broken in any way.

The casino team, early on in the process, met with a number of groups from all over the world who were interested in our project. That was one of the groups that was recommended by a local consultant. There were no negotiations conducted. There was no business conducted. They have not put in a bid, so no policy has been broken.

AIR QUALITY

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I have a question to the Minister of Environment and Energy. My question concerns your government's complete lack of action in the area of air pollution in this province. I don't believe there is any one of us today who could not have noticed the incredible cloud of smog that hung over the city. We are reminded on days like today, very directly, of the volumes of atmospheric pollutants that are present in the air we breathe, and we are also aware of the very serious health effects that this represents.

Indeed, according to the air quality index numbers, communities within and around Metropolitan Toronto are suffering through unacceptably high pollution levels. Cities like Mississauga and York and North York are enduring air pollution levels substantially higher than any acceptable level as prescribed by your ministry. My question is, what is your ministry doing, what are you doing, to combat this very serious problem of air pollution?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): As the member knows, in response to earlier

questions in the House, I assured him that the ministry is carrying out work on the development of regulations that will control and limit ground level ozone, and we anticipate that we will be introducing those regulations later this year.

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Mr Offer: Well, that is a very interesting and incomplete response.

Let me tell you, Mr Speaker, of that ministry's six-point plan. Firstly, the budget of the air resources branch of your ministry has been slashed by over \$4 million. Secondly, your government has killed the clean air program, which was designed to fundamentally revamp the outdated air pollution laws of Ontario. Thirdly, you have not developed a vehicle emission testing program for the province. Fourthly, you have ignored the problem of vapour emissions from gasoline. Fifthly, the number of inspectors who work at the vehicle emissions test centre of your ministry, a unit, Minister, which you have seemingly forgotten, has been reduced to the grand number of one. Finally, sixthly, let me remind you that in that outdated, fictional book, *An Agenda for People*, you stated that you would overhaul the air pollution laws of Ontario.

Minister, you and your government have done nothing. How can you claim to be committed to improving air quality in the province of Ontario when all of these actions indicate that you are doing absolutely nothing at a time when the people of this province need and deserve action?

Hon Mr Wildman: I guess I can only assure the member that the matters he has raised are matters of active consideration by the ministry. The question of the vehicle emission controls is being actively worked on, both by my ministry and the Ministry of Transportation, and we will be bringing forward regulations as soon as we can. We expect that will be later this year.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I have a question for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. At this very moment, officials from the province of Quebec and officials from the province of New Brunswick, including the deputy ministers, are meeting to resolve the problems related to the construction industry in both of those provinces. Madam Minister, that has resulted from the fact that the province of New Brunswick took some action to precipitate these negotiations. Don't you think it's time Ontario took the same action?

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I think steps were required to be taken to precipitate negotiations, so steps have been taken. Negotiations will be commencing shortly. I indicated to the member yesterday that meetings at an officials' level would be happening in the very near

future. In fact, that meeting will be taking place next week at the assistant deputy minister level, and the deputy and minister level meeting will be following that very shortly. As the agenda is worked out for the specific issues, there will be more than the construction, but that will be the main issue that will be under discussion when we meet.

Mr Sterling: Summer is the construction season for most of the construction workers in eastern Ontario. The fact of the matter is that last week officials from these two provinces were meeting. This week, officials from those two provinces are meeting, including the deputy ministers of the appropriate departments. Next week, they're going to meet to resolve this problem before the construction season has run out.

Meanwhile, the Ontario government sits back and waits for things to happen. What's going to happen is that the construction workers and the contractors from New Brunswick are going to benefit because their government took action, whereas the construction workers of Ontario and the contractors of Ontario are not going to benefit this summer because this government hasn't taken action.

Madam Minister, will you insist that any agreement struck between the province of New Brunswick and the province of Quebec vis-à-vis the cross-border contracting situation that we have described in this Legislature, which is patently unfair to contractors in Ontario, patently unfair to contracting workers in Ontario, will be duplicated in this province or you will immediately slap down restrictions which equal the Quebec restrictions and not wait for negotiations to take place but demand that our workers get treated as fairly as New Brunswick workers get treated?

Hon Ms Lankin: I think the member's position is a fair position to put forward. But I would say to him, first of all, that he must remember that the discussions I'm talking about that are going to be taking place next week and in the two weeks following that are not the first discussions with the province of Quebec. In fact, we have already been in discussions with them. I attended a meeting myself in March.

Secondly, with respect to what, if any agreements are arrived at between the province of New Brunswick and the province of Quebec, I will be pleased to look very directly at the result of that. I should indicate to him that there may be tradeoff issues there that would be inappropriate for Ontario. But the sentiment and the intent behind your question and your direction are ones that I think are reasonable. I will give every consideration to it at the time.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): My question is directed to the Minister of Citizenship. Over the last number of months, many constituents have contacted my office in regard to employment equity. Indeed, my

constituents have been hearing and reading confusing reports about employment equity through the media and by numerous groups that are indeed opposed to employment equity.

A good example of this is a recent article in the Toronto Star, on Monday, entitled "Employment Equity Another Reason For Companies To Avoid Ontario." This article states, "The employer may have to hire another, less qualified candidate to meet employment equity goals" and thus "compromise on the merit principle." It also states the government has simply "replaced the word 'quota' with the words 'goals and timetables.'"

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): Who on the ministry staff wrote this? This is a setup.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. The member for York Centre, please come to order.

Mr Duignan: Can the minister address some of the claims made in the article about the government's employment equity legislation, especially now that she's released the draft regulations on Bill 79? In particular, can the minister clarify the difference between "goals" and "timetables and quotas," and how the government will decide whether these goals and timetables are being reasonably met?

Hon Elaine Ziemba (Minister of Citizenship): I appreciate the question because it was a very well-put-together question and certainly is one of the many myths that has been floating around in Ontario for many years about employment equity.

First of all, to clarify for the member and for the other members in the House, when we talk about employment equity and the difference between a quota and goals and timetables—

Mr Sorbara: This is an infomercial, not a question. This is a ripoff.

The Speaker: Order. The member for York Centre is asked to come to order.

Mr Sorbara: Well, that's what she's doing.

The Speaker: I must caution the member for York Centre. Under our standing orders, by rotation, all three parties have an opportunity to ask questions and for a response. I ask the member for York Centre to respect that.

Hon Ms Ziemba: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. As this is an extremely important question, I'm going to try to be very succinct.

Mr Sorbara: It's stupid. We've got important issues here.

The Speaker: If the member for York Centre refuses to come to order, he will be named.

Hon Ms Ziemba: Again, the difference between "quotas" and "goals and timetables" is extremely important as we discuss employment equity. They often

get confused and interrelated. Quotas are when a government or an outside jurisdiction imposes a number on an employer about how many designated people it must hire within a specified time. What we are asking employers to do is to sit down and look at their opportunities for change, whether it's hiring or whether it's promotion.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Ms Ziemba: Mr Speaker, this is very important.

The Speaker: Could the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Ziemba: The opportunities for change will take into account how many designated group members are already in the workplace and how many designated group members are available within the community that they represent.

Mr Duignan: It's quite certain that the member for York Centre doesn't care about employment equity and that people have been discriminated against under his government and that government.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the member for Halton North please take his seat.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Regardless of the member's strong feelings on the issue, it is not helpful. Would the member direct his question through the Chair.

Mr Duignan: One of the other concerns expressed by my constituents over the last couple of months is the fact that this legislation is nothing more than reverse discrimination. I wonder, could you explain to the members of the House that this is not the case.

Hon Ms Ziemba: Reverse discrimination indicates or would imply that we now have a level playing field, that people are given an equal opportunity to enter the workforce and the workplace and are given an equal opportunity to be promoted within that workplace. Of course, as we know, the statistics have proved and shown to us that the four designated groups are not on a level playing field, that they are not given equal opportunity for promotion. They're not given an equal opportunity to even apply for a position.

What we are doing is making sure that we level the playing field so that everybody is given an equal opportunity based on their qualifications and their merit, and the best qualified person will be hired in the workplace and will be promoted.

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JOB CREATION

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Minister of Finance and has to do with the question of jobs and the outlook for jobs. I'm

sure you are aware that today the help wanted index, which is kind of a preliminary indication of the unemployment numbers, came out, and it showed that the national situation is bad and the Ontario situation is particularly bad.

I hope the unemployment numbers coming out Friday will not be as bad as these numbers indicate, and I think all of us hope the unemployment rate will be lower. But we now know that in terms of the 20% of the jobs that are covered under the broader public sector, I think it's fair to say there will be fewer jobs there, not more jobs. In your budget, you called for a growth of about 106,000 jobs this year and the unemployment rate dropping by about half a percentage point.

This is what I'm trying to get at: 106,000 jobs growing in the remaining 80% of the labour market. My question is this: There's a variety of sectors where those jobs could come from. Where does the ministry believe the 106,000 jobs will be created? In what sectors will we see those jobs growing?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): The member for Scarborough-Agincourt was at the standing committee on finance and economic affairs when I made a presentation a couple of weeks ago; I can't recall the exact date. During that presentation, I laid out to the committee the specific sectors where it appeared that there was going to be growth in productivity and employment in the next number of years.

Some of those sectors, for example, were sectors such as manufacturing; the auto sector itself; generally speaking, the high-tech areas of the economy. It's still our hope that we'll see job growth in those crucial sectors of the economy.

Having said that, I am aware that the unemployment rate is going to be remaining unacceptably high during the next three or four years. We're doing what we can through our capital investment of almost \$4 billion this year to keep jobs up. We can only do so much, but I think that almost \$4 billion is a major commitment on behalf of the people of this province to do what we can to stimulate jobs and growth in the critical areas of the economy.

Mr Phillips: The reason I'm pursuing this is that, for us in the Liberal Party, at least, this is the number one issue in the province is jobs. I realize that tackling the deficit is perhaps your number one issue right now. For us, it's an important issue, but jobs are more important.

As we look at the record of your government, each year you have failed to hit your targets on job growth and on the employment numbers. We see that all of the job growth year-to-date, the end of May, is in the service sector. Half of the service sector, as you know, is health and education, so we see the jobs that have been created year-to-date at risk, and we would like you

to be perhaps a little more specific to the opposition, but I think to all the public out there who are looking for some sense of hope about a future.

As I say, I'd like you to be a little clearer on where you see those 106,000 jobs being created. You've indicated in general terms the auto sector, but actually we see the manufacturing sector struggling, and that's where the auto sector is. I'd like to know more clearly, where will we see those net 106,000 jobs created? It's your budget. We're now literally halfway through the year. We're now three years into the NDP government. We are hoping you can be a little more helpful to the unemployed at home right now in where those 106,000 jobs are going to be created.

Hon Mr Laughren: To put something in perspective, we said in our budget that there were three priorities, not one, not just the deficit. We said that the three priorities were jobs, keeping the deficit under control and maintaining the essential services in this province.

Mr Phillips: That was last year's budget.

Hon Mr Laughren: This year's budget too. Those are our priorities, and that hasn't changed.

Our belief is that as we strategically invest in Ontario's economy—I know the member would agree that we as a province can only do so much direct investment ourselves. We simply don't have the money to do more than we're doing now, but I think the \$4 billion is important.

In terms of the private sector, which is where most of the job creation is going to have to come, I believe they're going to be in those key sectors I already mentioned: the auto sector, telecommunications, trade and services. Those are the sectors that we believe—and not just us; private forecasters and economists and think tank groups will tell you the same thing, that those are the key sectors as we work our way through the 1990s.

But there's no question that there's a massive restructuring going on out there in the province and elsewhere, and what we can do is whatever we can in terms of strategic provincial investments to aid and abet that process of restructuring that's going on out there. But we ourselves, I believe, cannot do more than spending the \$4 billion we are on capital this year.

TAX INCREASES

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): My question's for the Minister of Finance. It has to do with the budget that your government recently brought down.

There's no doubt that your \$2-billion tax grab knows no limits. You've increased the taxes on personal income, tax on insurance and on automobiles, tax on houses, tax on health insurance, tax on home insurance, tax on employee benefits, and then you found out, only because my staff informed the ministry, that you've taxed deposit insurance paid by banks, trust companies and credit unions. This tax will net the government an

additional \$20 million, most of it coming in the form of higher service charges paid by consumers.

As if this wasn't enough, your government has also found a way of taxing the dream of home ownership. The 8% sales tax now hits CMHC-insured mortgages. This means that the first-time home buyer who can barely make the down payment, who is taking advantage of the new 5% down payment, is the hardest hit. This is also the most fragile market—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Cousens: —there has been in the real estate industry for some time. These taxes are unjust and unnecessary, but the part which is most frightening—

The Speaker: Does the member have a question?

Mr Cousens: I'm coming right up to it. The part that's most frightening is the question, and it is that you didn't even know that these taxes were within your budget. How many of these surprises are there going to be in that total budget you brought out?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): The ones I don't know of, I don't know.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): That wasn't done by Tory research.

Hon Mr Laughren: That's right. I'll try and give a serious response, though, to the question, and it was asked of me yesterday as well.

The tax on the insurance part of the mortgage on a \$200,000 home, which is the example I used yesterday, comes to around \$300, as I recall, \$360, something like that. I would remind the member for Markham as well that it was this government, and this Premier in particular, who led the charge to have RRSP money that could be withdrawn and put into mortgages, so we have done a lot for first-time home buyers in this province. A relatively small percentage, I think it's one fifth of 1% of the mortgage, would be reflected in the insurance on a \$200,000 home. I think it's not an onerous burden, although I appreciate the fact that no one likes to pay more taxes.

Mr Cousens: This Treasurer just loves socialism, and when people say, "How do you like socialism so far?" there's no doubt that this government is in love with the socialist philosophy that's changing Ontario for ever. They brought out a budget that is netting the government increased revenues they didn't even know were going to be there: a \$20-million windfall from the insurance on deposit insurance, and another windfall from people scratching out an income to buy a home, and you're going to take some of that kind of money.

1500

What we really want to see you as a government do, who are so wrapped up in your socialist philosophy and grabbing the money from the people, is to come back, revisit your budget and come out with some fresh

figures so that we can really have a sense of how much money you're going to be taking out of the economy. Are you prepared to go back and look at your budget again and detail all the undeclared revenues that you're bringing in to us from this big tax grab?

Hon Mr Laughren: This government has never had a tax revenue windfall in our two and a half years in office.

Mr Cousens: Twenty million bucks.

Hon Mr Laughren: We have not had.

I would just remind the member for Markham that when you look at the entire tax regime in this province and compare us with other provinces—I want to be very specific here—on the retail sales tax we're the third lowest in Canada, on the corporate income tax rate for manufacturing we're the fourth lowest in Canada, on payroll and capital taxes we're the lowest in Canada, on incomes less than \$29,590 we're the third lowest in Canada and for over \$30,000 we're right in the middle of all the other provinces in Canada.

I can tell the member for Markham that we do not have an onerous tax burden and, in conclusion, I can tell the member for Markham that the amount of tax revenues as a percentage of the gross domestic product in this province in 1993 is lower now than it was in 1989 before this government came to office.

CONTAMINATED SOIL

Mr Robert Frankford (Scarborough East): A question to the Chair of Management Board: Minister, last week you announced that our government had been able to resolve the long-standing problem of radioactive soil on McClure Crescent in Scarborough by moving soil to a storage site near Tapscott Road. Now I hear that industries near Tapscott Road are organizing in opposition to your plan. Why were these industries not aware of your proposals?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): Let me start out by thanking the member for his question and say that, first of all, anybody in any of the properties affected who wasn't aware of the proposals chose not to be aware of the proposals.

Mr Speaker, you'll recall after my statement last week both the member for Scarborough North and the third party critic in their responses complimented the government on the consultation that had gone on with the community around that removal of the soil from McClure Crescent and the consultation that had gone on with the people in the affected potential storage area. That consultation has been extensive. They should have known.

In any kind of a difficult situation like this, in any event there are always going to be some who object, and I think that has been taken into account in weighing the pros and cons of where we're going to temporarily

store the soil, over and against getting it out of the yards of those people who are directly affected by it where they live.

Mr Frankford: Minister, do you expect to receive any support from the federal government in resolving this issue?

Hon Mr Charlton: Well, there's a yes and a no to that answer. Yes, the federal government is working with us in terms of its responsibility for the handling of low-level radioactive waste. Eventually the federal government will be putting in place a permanent storage site for this waste. That's why we're presently having to do an interim relocation of that soil.

In the meantime, the proposal that we have will take the soil out of McClure Crescent, take it to the temporary storage site and separate out the contaminated particles of plastic that are contained in that soil. That contaminated plastic will be removed totally from the site in containers and taken to Chalk River, where the federal government already has some storage facilities. Then the rest of the soil, which will be contained on the site, will eventually be moved to a permanent federal site.

DAY CARE

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): To the Minister of Community and Social Services: Tomorrow, Minister, the region of Peel council will be meeting to make a decision on eliminating 932 day care spaces provided currently in homes in that community. They're doing that because they have to find \$600,000 to complete the target that was given to them by the Treasurer for them to find the savings under the expenditure control program.

Your contribution, Minister, is \$3.8 million, as you know. They've offered you a deal that you have rejected that would see most of those day care spaces retained in the community, but you have rejected it.

If the region is forced to decide to cut those day care spaces, on behalf of the users and the providers, Minister, will you commit today to provide the full \$3.8 million of provincial funding regardless of Peel regional council's decision tomorrow?

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): I made it clear to the chair of the regional council of Peel when I spoke to him by telephone a couple of days ago that our interest was very much in continuing the programs, that we wanted the regional municipality to do its utmost to be able to continue the programs and that if the council took, in our view, the unfortunate decision to cut the program, then I would be looking for ways in which we could maintain our funding in the program and maintain the programs that are there now.

Mr Mahoney: The region has done an analysis that shows that if you were to indeed commit to provide the

provincial funds, through attrition they would really not lose any spaces for the kids who require those spaces. You recognize that, if this program goes, the providers will wind up out of work and they will simply wind up on one form or another of social assistance. The women who require these day care spaces will also find that they have to stay home to take care of their kids and they'll be out of work and wind up on some form of social assistance.

We need a clear decision for the people who depend on this service. If Peel regional council makes a decision to fund the \$600,000 that will top up to \$4.2 million, the target given to it by your government, if it uses that \$600,000, will you commit to the users and providers of day care in Peel region that you will fund \$3.8 million to the region of Peel to allow it to continue to provide those day care spaces? Yes or no, Minister?

Hon Mr Silipo: The grants that are paid out to the municipality are conditional grants. As the member well knows, they are conditional on the municipality topping up the 80% of the funds that we provide, adding the 20% and providing the program at full capacity. If the municipality decides to shut down the program, then we are going to be doing whatever we can to maintain our level of funding in the program and to maintain the program to that level of funding that we can maintain.

We believe and we hope that the municipality can find other areas in which it can make reductions. But obviously that's a decision for them to make. If they decide that this is an area that they are going to cut, then we will obviously look at what we can do to at least continue the amount of funding that we provide in the program and the extent of service that can be provided through the 80% funding we now provide.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATES

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Last week I filed a notice of dissatisfaction with the answer given by the Minister of Education and Training with response to a question on Jobs Ontario. I was notified it was to have been dealt with yesterday. Unfortunately, due to an oversight which I think had to do with exhaustion after several hours of voting on the social contract legislation, the matter was not called. I would ask for unanimous consent that it be dealt with tomorrow at the end of proceedings.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I appreciate the member's point of order and indeed ask if there's unanimous consent for the late show to occur. Agreed? No? I heard at least one no.

I would put before the House again the request by the member. There was an oversight. I realize that this House spent a considerable amount of time in a voting procedure and, as a result of that, was unable to have what's commonly known as the late show. I think the honourable member for Eglinton has made a reasonable request for the House and I will put the question again.

Is there unanimous consent for the late show to occur? Agreed.

Hon Mike Farnan (Minister without Portfolio in Education and Training): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would request that the member leave it over till Monday. There is a greater possibility that we can have attendance by the minister at that time.

The Speaker: If I understand, there had been some arrangement and agreement between the member and the minister involved for tomorrow, for Thursday, at 6 of the clock.

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): Point of personal privilege.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Point of privilege, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: One at a time, please. The member for Eglinton.

1510

Ms Poole: I approached the Clerk's office about the fact that it had not been called yesterday. I asked if it could be dealt with today. They had talked to the minister and he asked if it could be dealt with tomorrow instead of today. I had agreed to that, so I don't think it's a problem with the minister.

The Speaker: I take it it's agreed, and it will be Thursday at 6 of the clock. I recognize the honourable member for York Mills with his point of order.

Mr Turnbull: Yes, Mr Speaker, on a related matter: I too had called for the late show for the Minister of Education and Training, and in discussions with him last week, he said he would not be able to attend and asked that it be deferred. We deferred it to yesterday evening. You know what happened. In recognition of what the government member has suggested, I would be happy to put it over to next Tuesday at 6 o'clock.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): Why not tomorrow?

Mr Turnbull: I will not be in the House tomorrow, much in the same way as the Minister of Education was not in the House for the two preceding times that were arranged. I understood from the Minister of Education yesterday evening that he would support such a putting over and I understood that in fact there would be unanimous consent from their side.

The Speaker: These requests place the Chair in a very awkward position in that the Chair is not privy to conversations between members and ministers.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): In the case of the first incident that was raised with us, it was raised with us before it was raised here, and I was able to confirm with the minister that tomorrow night was not a problem.

If the member would be prepared to raise this ques-

tion again tomorrow, I will have had an opportunity to confirm that it's acceptable to the minister so that we don't end up with any further delays in that respect, if that would help.

Mr Turnbull: I think I just mentioned that in fact I will not be in the House tomorrow, so that will not be possible.

The Speaker: What I might suggest to the member is that perhaps he could contact the minister and, if at all possible, reach some accommodation before 5 of the clock today and so inform the House, and we can make the necessary arrangements with or without the individual member being present.

PETITIONS

PRODUCE-YOUR-OWN BEER AND WINE

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I have a petition that I've been asked to present to the government. It was submitted by Mr Fergus Whelan, the president of Bubbles 'N' Brew in the city of Trenton and it reads:

"We, the undersigned, believe that the new tax on brew-on-premises home brew is unfair, unwanted and unreasonable.

"We are concerned that it will eliminate jobs without increasing government revenue.

"This new tax is inspired by big, multinational brewing corporations whose only desire is to keep us from enjoying home brew. Scrap the tax before it begins."

HEALTH CARE

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a petition that was sent to me from the Onaping Falls medical centre in Levack, Ontario, and it reads:

"Respecting the government proposal to shut out new doctors in Ontario:

"The Ontario government proposal to shut out new family doctors, paediatricians and psychiatrists from practising in most areas of Ontario is unacceptable.

"It will prevent these doctors from serving those patients who need care the most. Here are some examples:

"Women and children who need more access to female psychiatrists, paediatricians and family physicians.

"Young female doctors form a much larger percentage of graduating doctors than the existing doctor population.

"Cancer patients who will be denied care by doctors trained in palliative care and paediatric cancer.

"Parents who have difficulty in finding obstetricians to deliver their babies and who therefore rely on young family physicians.

"Psychiatric patients, including children, who already wait for an assessment, depending on where they live.

"It's also a waste of millions of dollars of taxpayers money already spent in training these doctors, doctors the people of Ontario will never get a chance to use.

"I oppose the Ontario government's proposal to shut out new doctors from practising."

That's signed by several hundred people from that area of the province, and I too affix my name to this petition.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Peter North (Elgin): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we have grave concerns over the Ministry of Health's proposal to downsize and eliminate the mental health services at St Thomas Psychiatric Hospital;

"Whereas we condemn the inhumane approach to fiscal management;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We demand that the Minister of Health immediately cease and desist the abandonment of the high quality of care that has always been provided by the St Thomas Psychiatric Hospital."

That's signed by some 550 people in the Elgin and surrounding areas, and I will affix my signature to that particular petition.

CONTRAT SOCIAL

M. Jean Poirier (Prescott et Russell) : J'ai une pétition justement, je crois, de 20 enseignants et enseignantes de l'école secondaire l'Escale de Rockland qui pétitionnent l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario justement pour protester contre le contrat social du premier ministre Bob Rae. J'y ai apposé ma signature et je les appuie à 100 %.

GAMBLING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has had a historical concern for the poor in society, who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change in government policy and was never

part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation, and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

I support this petition and I'm happy to loan my signature to it.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I'm going to present this petition:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We are upset and angry regarding the impact of Bill 48 on the public sector employees. Not only will this bill affect our pensions and salaries, but it will destroy our basic democratic right to bargain collectively.

"We do not agree with your attempt to destroy our unions. We are prepared to oppose the passage of this bill with every resource at our disposal. You must kill Bill 48."

It is signed by the staff from Glen Dhu Community School in Whitby, and I'm glad to affix my signature to this very fine and important petition.

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): I have a petition here which is signed by a number of people throughout Kent county. It's addressed to the honourable Lieutenant Governor of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it says:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That free and open collective bargaining for public service employees be restored and be returned to its honourable position in Ontario;

"That the social contract in its present form be destroyed and that the valuable programs and services in the public sector be maintained for the betterment of all Ontarians;

"That the government withdraw Bill 48 and, in place of this bill, the government work cooperatively with the public sector unions to find an equitable solution rather than eliminating valuable public sector unions."

In keeping with accordance of the procedures in introducing petitions, I hereby introduce these petitions on behalf of the constituents in my riding.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Frank Miclash (Kenora): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I too have put my name to that petition.

1520

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): I have a petition signed by approximately 200 constituents on Bill 164.

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

So signed, and I have affixed my signature to this. Regretfully, it was not submitted to the House prior to the passage of Bill 164, but the fact of the matter is that people are genuinely upset and concerned that the government is not prepared to do anything in response to the complaints that people have. It is a serious problem that's going on within society today. The government continues to do what it wants and the public has no choice but to put petitions in, and they are having no effect on it at all.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): I have a petition here from the secondary school teachers of my riding.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That free and open collective bargaining for public service employees be restored and be returned to its honourable position in Ontario;

"That the social contract in its present form be destroyed and that the valuable programs and services in the public sector be maintained for the betterment of all Ontarians;

"That the government withdraw Bill 48 and, in place of this bill, that the government work cooperatively with the public service unions to find an equitable solution rather than eliminating valuable public services."

I am submitting this on behalf of my constituents.

GO BUS SERVICE

Mr Charles Beer (York North): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We oppose the provincial government's cancellation of GO bus route 6565, Newmarket-King-Maple-Yorkdale. To many of us, this is the only means of transportation; to the elderly, possibly the only means."

I have signed this petition in support.

PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition signed by 356 residents of Wellington county in the city of Guelph in support of retaining GO train service in Guelph, and I wish to present it to the Ontario Legislature at this time for the consideration of the provincial government.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): I have a petition to the provincial Parliament.

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition to wide-open Sunday business.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on retailers, retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I have over 700 signatures from constituents in my riding. I will affix my signature to this petition and I support it.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario re Bill 38, an amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act to permit wide-open Sunday shopping and eliminate Sunday as a legal holiday:

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38.

"We believe that this bill defies God's laws, violates the principle of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection to workers regarding

when they must work and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province.

"The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man but dates from God's creation, and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all people, both physically and spiritually.

"We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

It's signed by 28 constituents and I affix my signature.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I have signed this petition.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I have a petition here from many, many residents in my riding, some several hundred, including the Dancys on Park Road, Arlene Jarvis and Dr Charles E. McIlveen, a former member of this assembly from the city of Oshawa.

They are petitioning our Legislature, registering their opposition in the strongest possible terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of "legal holiday" in the Retail Business Holidays Act. They "believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families."

The amendment included in "Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated.

GAMBLING

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the

expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I have signed the petition.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): The member for Mississauga South, I believe you have a committee report to submit?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): Get with it, Margaret.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): Have I said anything mean to you today, Mr Treasurer? Are you going to be nice to me, Mr Treasurer?

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Mrs Marland from the standing committee on government agencies presented the committee's sixth report.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 106(g)(11), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

COURTS OF JUSTICE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993 LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES TRIBUNAUX JUDICIAIRES

On motion by Mrs Boyd, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 68, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act and to make related amendments to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Justices of the Peace Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les tribunaux judiciaires et apportant des modifications corrélatives à la Loi sur l'accès à l'information et la protection de la vie privée et à la Loi sur les juges de paix.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Minister, do you wish to make any statement?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): No, Mr Speaker. I did make a statement in ministers' time and look forward to discussing the bill in debate.

1530

COMMERCIAL CONCENTRATION TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI DE L'IMPÔT

SUR LES CONCENTRATIONS COMMERCIALES

On motion by Mrs Caplan, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 71, An Act to amend the Commercial Concentration Tax Act / Loi modifiant la Loi de l'impôt sur les concentrations commerciales.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Do you wish to make a brief statement?

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Orlino): When I tabled the bill, I noted the surprise on the Finance minister's face, and in fact he should be surprised. It is quite unusual for an opposition member to table government legislation, and that is what my bill is today. It is exactly the same as the first sections of Bill 29 that deal with the commercial concentration tax repeal.

It's my hope that the government will accept this bill and move it forward. We can then, if they wish, through the proper process of this House, deal with all of those other sections of Bill 29 which have nothing whatever to do with the commercial concentration tax repeal.

I'm concerned that Bill 29, as it now stands, is not only confusing; it is devious and it has been described as sneaky. My legislation today will clarify that situation. I have the word of our opposition House leader that if the Treasurer will accept this bill, we will support it as government legislation, bang, bang, bang; first, second and third reading, without delay.

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I beg leave to introduce a bill called An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act and that the bill be read for the first time.

The Deputy Speaker: This is the wrong copy. I wonder if you could give me the right one. There is another form that could be used.

Mrs Sullivan: I don't have the other form, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Perhaps you could reintroduce it tomorrow.

Mrs Sullivan: Yes, I'll do that.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SOCIAL CONTRACT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONTRAT SOCIAL

Mr Laughren moved third reading of Bill 48, An Act to encourage negotiated settlements in the public sector to preserve jobs and services while managing reductions in expenditures and to provide for certain matters

related to the Government's expenditure reduction program / Loi visant à favoriser la négociation d'accords dans le secteur public de façon à protéger les emplois et les services tout en réduisant les dépenses et traitant de certaines questions relatives au programme de réduction des dépenses du gouvernement.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Would you wish, Minister, to make a statement?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Mr Speaker, just before the minister proceeds, I believe there's been an agreement between the three House leaders that the Finance minister will make his comments, then they will split the time between then and 5:30, and then at 5:30 the Premier will do a wrapup.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed? Agreed.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I am pleased to lead off debate on Bill 48, the Social Contract Act. As members will understand, I believe, the Social Contract Act and what flows from it is designed to effect \$2 billion in public sector compensation savings in this fiscal year and each of the two subsequent years.

We feel very strongly that the combination of the expenditure reductions which are taking place through the expenditure control plan and the almost \$2 billion in tax increases that were contained in the budget present a fair and balanced approach to getting Ontario's financial house back in shape, and it is out of shape now.

We believe that if we had said, "No, we don't need the \$2 billion in savings from the public sector, we'll take it out of expenditure reductions instead," that would have meant very, very significant layoffs in the public sector all across the province. It's hard to pinpoint precisely the number, but I would think somewhere between 20,000 to 30,000 job losses in the public sector.

We had, of course, another alternative: to raise taxes even more than we did. I think we pushed the envelope as far as we could on tax increases this year.

The third option, of course, was to allow the deficit to rise by a further \$2 billion. I believe that would have been unacceptable, that as we come out of the recession we simply have got to get the deficit going down.

Even with these moves, even with the moves of \$4 billion under the expenditure control plan and the significant tax increases and the social contract \$2 billion in savings, we are still this year going to have a deficit of over \$9 billion.

I can tell you that when we formed the government, the cumulative debt of this province was in the neighbourhood of \$40 billion. Right now it's over \$68 billion and it's ticking away at the rate of, in this year's case, another \$9 billion. We were heading for a situation in

which, very quickly, in the next year or two, the amount of money we spent on servicing the debt would be the largest single expenditure of this province, more than we spend on hospitals, more than we spend on education, more than we spend on social services. I believe that would have been irresponsible, and we simply had to take some action.

I believe as well that regardless of what government was sitting in these positions over here, it would have done something. I'm not sure they would have done exactly what we're doing. I'm not sure there would have been a social contract.

But I can tell you that if what other governments have done across this land is any indication, what would have been done by another party in government would have been a lot more draconian, a lot meaner, a lot less fair than what this government is attempting to do through the social contract. Don't take my word for it; look at what's happened in other provinces, and look as well at the severity of our fiscal problems compared to other provinces'.

The intent of this act is to encourage workers, employers and the government to negotiate settlements that will be in everyone's best interests and will achieve expenditure savings of \$2 billion this year and each of the next two years.

The process is working, somewhat. There have been two agreements signed, one with the community services sector—that was achieved yesterday—and today, very recently, the police sector signed an agreement, including the police and the police services boards and the government. There are eight sectors in total.

This morning the Ontario public service sector negotiations ended when the Ontario Public Service Employees Union walked away from the process. I regret that very much, for a number of reasons.

One, I believe it's in everyone's best interests to achieve a voluntary agreement rather than be subjected to the fail-safe mechanism contained in Bill 48.

The reason I think it's in everyone's best interests is that if a sectoral agreement is reached, there are lower savings targets that must be realized.

In the case of the Ontario public service, the difference is about a \$31-million lower target if a sectoral agreement is achieved. That \$31 million, using a very rough rule of thumb, represents about 600 jobs that will no longer be protected in the Ontario public service, because the savings target is now \$31 million higher because no sectoral agreement has been voluntarily reached up to this point.

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The government had put on the public service table a number of inducements to achieve a voluntary agreement. First, we had assured the parties at the table that the job security fund would be available to provide 95%

of employees' incomes for up to a year if they, as a result of this exercise or, quite frankly, as a result of the expenditure control exercise as well, were subjected to temporary layoffs.

Secondly, if the agreements could be reached, there would be no need for any permanent layoffs; some temporary layoffs quite likely, yes, but we believe that the combination of the job security fund that I mentioned plus recall rights plus the other inducements such as early retirement, voluntary exit, combined with the attrition in the public sector, which has admittedly dropped in the last couple of years, would not have necessitated any permanent layoffs whatsoever.

So I believe there are still adequate incentives there for our own employees to come back to the Ontario public service table. That is their decision, of course, not ours. We welcome them back at any time because I really, really believe it's in everyone's best interests, in particular in the best interests of their own membership, to come back to the table and negotiate in order to protect those 600 jobs and in order to realize the other savings through the job security fund and through early retirement options and so forth. I regret very much that they have chosen to walk.

Our provisions for workers who reach agreements underline our respect for those who work in the public sector and serve their communities so well. I very much hope that we will see a large number of agreements. Out of the eight sectors, it would be very nice to have them all agree.

I understand the argument that this is an intrusion into the sanctity of collective bargaining, but I would put to you that that's not the only sanctity there is in this province. There's also the sanctity of protecting vulnerable people and protecting jobs in the public service. I know it's a tough tradeoff—very difficult for this government in particular, if I could say it; very difficult for us to proceed with this bill—but we believe that the principle of protecting the vulnerable through the provision of services in all the communities across the province and the principle of protecting jobs in the public sector, the people who deliver those services, are important principles, and we believe that in this case the tradeoff simply must be there. We don't take great satisfaction in that, but I believe that's the case, because it really does preserve jobs and services.

Bargaining agents can choose not to be subjected to Bill 48, not to be subjected to the fail-safe mechanism, as we call it, by arriving at a voluntary agreement before August 1. Not only that: Through amendments that were put yesterday, we have amended the bill so that even if a sector doesn't reach an agreement or if there is no local agreement by August 1 and the fail-safe mechanism clicks in and applies to that sector, such as the Ontario public service sector that walked away this morning, after August 1, if that sector, having lived

under the fail-safe mechanism for a number of months in this fiscal year we're in now, decides it would prefer to negotiate a sectoral agreement for the next two years, that is quite appropriate, and we would be prepared to engage in those negotiations to make that happen.

I know there was some criticism of that amendment in the House by the third party today. But I would say to the third party, why would we so fiercely lock into the fail-safe mechanism, Bill 48, for the full three years if, after August 1, a sector comes to the agreement or comes to the conclusion that it would like the lower targets for the next two years and that it would like the benefits that are offered through the voluntary agreements under the social contract? Why wouldn't we entertain that? I believe that in some cases they will come up with more creative and better solutions than are contained in Bill 48, so why would we reject that?

I understand it's a very difficult decision for the trade unions in this province to accept this bill. I appreciate that fact, but I really believe it's in the best interests of their members to avoid this bill by arriving at and coming to a voluntary agreement.

We have made some amendments in the bill. For example, we've changed the original requirements of the bill on low-income people and we have exempted totally people who earn under \$30,000. The bill as originally drafted said it was for people earning under \$30,000 on an annualized basis. We've removed that from the bill because most people who earn under \$30,000, particularly those people who work part-time—if you annualized their salary, they would end up earning over \$30,000—are not working part-time because they choose to. Very often, it's because that's the only job available to them.

Why would we do that? I know it puts pressure on the remaining employees in that particular sector who must achieve the targets, but I think that in the interest of fairness it was better to remove the annualized aspect of the low-income cutoff aspect of the bill so that, if you earn under \$30,000, you are exempt from the reduction in compensation aspects of the bill.

I realize there will be some distortions and I believe it was the third party again that raised the question of people who may perhaps work at a very high hourly rate, weekly rate or per diem rate and if you annualized their income it would be more than \$30,000 a year—someone who earns \$500 a day doing some specialized work. But I believe the number of examples that you could come up with in that regard are not as important as the very large number of people who work part-time and earn under \$30,000, the vast majority of whom are women. I think it was an appropriate tradeoff.

We clarified in the act, through our amendments as well, that nothing in the act overrides the Human Rights Code. What was already contained in the act was that nothing would affect the Pay Equity Act and the

provisions therein, but we've added the Human Rights Code to that as well. We've clarified some of the ambiguous wording that was in the bill and we spelled out some administrative arrangements as well.

The successful negotiations that have occurred so far, two out of the eight sectors, show at least that unions, government, employers can work together to achieve voluntary agreements. It's my hope that that will continue to happen and that we will achieve voluntary agreements. My dream would be to achieve it in all eight sectors—whether that happens or not, I don't know—in which case the fail-safe mechanism will drop into place.

But it must be very clear to people that we must achieve these savings. There was some scepticism when we announced our intention to proceed with the social contract that we would ever achieve these savings. There was scepticism from the financial markets and, quite frankly, from some people in this Legislature. But I think it should be clear that we are determined to get our financial house back in order in this province, because the spending of the 1980s cannot be sustained, given the revenues of the 1990s. It was fine in the 1980s but it's not fine in the 1990s, and we've simply got to achieve that.

If we didn't, we would continue to transfer an increasing amount of Ontario taxpayers' money to wealthy bond holders somewhere else in the world, not even in Ontario, because over two thirds of all our new borrowing is not done in this province, not even done in this country, and that's because of necessity. The private capital markets cannot provide us with the amount of money that we're borrowing, which is running along at over \$1 billion a month, and that simply means that we have to borrow elsewhere in the world.

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I've always thought that it's truly a perverse redistribution of income to take working people's taxes in this province and transfer those taxes to wealthy bond holders somewhere else in the world. That, to me, is not my vision of redistribution of income. Also, that means that the money that's going to pay the interest is not being used to provide jobs in the public sector, to provide services in the public sector, to provide a better educational system. For me, that's more important, and it's more important that we get that under control.

It's not simply to save money for the saving of money's sake, it's to preserve jobs and services that we are proceeding with Bill 48 and to protect the very vulnerable people who depend on those services, because, make no mistake about it, if we had taken the \$2 billion in some other way, through the reduction of transfers, either the educational system would have suffered or the public services sector would have suffered, and in many cases we really are talking about the most vulnerable people and we're not prepared to do

that. That is why we have determined to proceed with this legislation.

I do recognize that it represents an enormous compromise for many people to accept the social contract, I appreciate that, and it's a profound compromise. But I really believe that it's necessary for the common good to do this. I think it's not appropriate to have simply allowed the public sector to have continued on without these actions, because I feel very strongly that while the public sector is not the cause of the financial problems in this province—it didn't cause them—at the same time it has to be part of the solution.

Other people are part of the solution too. That's what the tax increases are all about. That's what the expenditure reductions are all about. So we're not simply selecting public sector employees and saying, "You've got to pay the entire price." That's simply not the case. But at the same time the public sector must be part of the solution.

I know that it's not easy. Difficult problems never are easy to solve. But I would conclude by simply saying that the alternative to what we're doing would be more unpalatable and especially more unpalatable to the very people who are most upset about us proceeding with this legislation. That's assuming, of course, you accept the premise that something had to be done about that \$2 billion. I believe that only by acting together, by working with the public sector and its employees, can we make this province a better place in which to live and work.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any other members who wish to participate in this debate?

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): Any questions and answers, Mr Speaker?

The Deputy Speaker: No, there are no questions and answers for the simple reason I believe there isn't enough time. You're dividing your time among yourselves.

Mrs Marland: That's fine. I just wanted to understand where we were.

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My understanding is that we will divide the time between now and 5:30, which, I gather, will leave each party around 50 minutes or so. Is that correct?

The Deputy Speaker: The clock—it's being done.

Mr Phillips: Yes, just the two opposition parties.

I'm pleased to begin the third reading debate, I guess by first acknowledging that this, without any doubt, is the most important bill that we will deal with here in the life of this government. Just to set the stage, I don't think there's any doubt that there's agreement we must tackle the deficit problem and there's no doubt that a major part of tackling it has to be working with the roughly million people who work in the public service and the broader public service.

Our strongly held view is that this bill is indeed fundamentally flawed and, secondly, that there was a better way. The government has chosen a way that we think was very wrong. The problem is only time will tell, and it gives no one, certainly in our party, much comfort to be able to say six months or a year from now that we were right and you were wrong. That's why we've fought, literally from the day this bill was introduced, to try and persuade the government that it was fundamentally flawed and there was an alternative.

I hope in the time allocated to us that I'll have a chance to point out the areas. I'll just try and enumerate them.

One is that we don't think this will achieve your financial savings. We think there are several elements in here that merely delay expenditures, particularly in the leave provision where an awful lot of it will be banked and will be paid off in three years. That not only delays the expenditures, but it has a major element of unfairness. Some employees will be able to bank those days; others won't.

As the Minister of Finance said, this is an unprecedented intrusion into collective bargaining, and maybe not all of the public care about that. But I will just say there are 9,000 agreements between employers and employees in this province and this will prove to have been an enormous intrusion in that. The government is going to step into every one of those collective agreements and impose certain conditions on them.

As the Minister of Finance said, it overrides an enormous number of acts that this Legislature has passed: the Employment Standards Act, the Labour Relations Act, the Police Services Act. Many, many acts are deliberately overridden by this legislation, an enormous intrusion.

It establishes a precedent for a minister to have incredible powers. The NDP may say, "That's fine because we're in power and we're fair." I will say to them that you establish this precedent now and you establish it for future governments, and I don't think the NDP would have stood still for a moment to allow any other government to introduce legislation that gives a minister the power to approve, and the sole power to approve, these sectoral agreements.

The fail-safe mechanisms: The minister says it's an incentive. I say that if this were a private sector agreement and you said, "If you don't come to an agreement in four weeks, we're going to cut our offer by 20%. You have to agree in four weeks or we'll cut our offer by 20%," I don't think you would find any private sector company that would be allowed to do that.

I think perhaps the best indication of why the bill is flawed is that the bill has now had, from the government, 29 amendments, and for those in the public who may not be familiar with the process, yesterday we

began final debate, around 4 o'clock, on what we call clause-by-clause discussion. At five minutes to 4, we got, I think, eight more amendments to the bill.

We're talking about a bill that impacts one out of five workers in the province, that impacts over \$40 billion worth of salary and remuneration, and five minutes before we begin final debate for the last two hours, we got very substantial amendments that employers and employees out there are only now being given copies of. Yet the bill will become law this afternoon at 6 o'clock and we will have had not even 24 hours to look at major amendments.

I will say also that one of the saddest parts of all the fallout of this is that this exercise has begun to pit many of our public servants against the broader public, particularly the leadership of the unions.

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Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): You should have been here 1982. If only that line had been used by the Liberals in 1982.

Mr Phillips: That I believe is most unfortunate, because I think it's only just begun, unfortunately, particularly with the time frames. As we move into the debate, I'll be talking in more detail about our concerns with the bill.

Hon Mr Cooke: You had none of those concerns in 1982.

Mr Phillips: The Minister of Education and Training is once again trying to interrupt, when many of the people who are concerned about this bill are in the educational sector. Many of them will be dramatically impacted by this, but the Minister of Education wants to holler from his seat. I don't think they will appreciate that.

Hon Mr Cooke: Gerry, well, because I can't participate in the debate. You wouldn't allow us to have any of the time.

Mr Phillips: The member says he can't participate in the debate. We would have been happy to have a very prolonged debate on this.

How did we get here? Because the Minister of Finance raised a point that's bothered me in this debate, and that is that he's essentially said, "Somebody else is to blame for our financial mess, the federal Conservatives with free trade," or, "The Liberals left us a mess." I will say that there's been only one balanced budget—

Applause.

Mr Phillips: Thank you—in 20 years in the province and that was five months before the government came in. I appreciate the applause. Only one balanced budget in 20 years and that was five months before the NDP came in.

Then what happened? I think history will show that the first budget of Floyd Laughren and Premier Rae was

a huge mistake. You may remember that the Premier said he would spend his way out of the recession. That was the fundamental mistake. We are paying for that now. The reason I'm raising this is that throughout this entire debate the Premier has never acknowledged that perhaps he was wrong, that perhaps you couldn't spend your way out of the recession, that perhaps running three straight deficits of \$10 billion was wrong.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I basically have sat here since the election of September 6—

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): What's your point of order, please?

Mr Perruzza: —and I've never heard—well, my point is that he's quoted the Premier. I'd like to know—

The Acting Speaker: That's not a point of order.

Mr Perruzza: —which page and chapter in Hansard he's quoting from—

The Acting Speaker: That's not a point of order. The honourable member will please sit down.

Mr Perruzza: —because I never heard those words—

The Acting Speaker: That's not a point of order.

Mr Perruzza: —from the Premier of the province. I've heard similar kinds of things—

The Acting Speaker: That's not a point of order. The honourable member for Downsview will please sit down. The honourable member for Scarborough-Agincourt has the floor.

Mr Phillips: Mr Speaker, I think if you go back to the budget, you will find very clearly that Premier Rae said: "We had a choice. We could have fought the deficit or the recession. We're fighting the recession. We are going to run a \$10-billion deficit." The reason I raise this is because all of the million people who are directly impacted by this legislation should appreciate this: You can't blame Premier Rae for all of it, but that first budget was a fundamental mistake that we are now paying for, paying for dramatically.

Getting on now to the bill, the reason I'm raising the financial problem is because Premier Rae has said this is the only way, the only bill that can solve our problems. I think the bill is fundamentally flawed. I think there are other bills that could have been introduced.

My leader, it was probably 10 weeks ago, made the recommendation that what should have happened—Premier Rae wouldn't listen to it but it proved to be right—was that the government should have said to all the partners in the province: "Here are your financial parameters. Here are the financial parameters that have to be lived within. We will give you the tools—the employers and the employees—to reach the agreements necessary to find those solutions."

The third thing is that the government should have sat

down with its own employees long ago, should have sat down with the Ontario Public Service Employees Union long ago and reached an agreement. But they didn't and now we find that OPSEU has been put in a very tough spot. If the government had sat down six months ago with OPSEU, I think we could have had a model agreement.

I guess I should spend a little bit of time on the bill itself. The first thing we're concerned about is that this bill does not represent real restraint. The challenge in this, if you read the bill carefully, is that many of the employees, I think, will say, "What we want to do is to be deemed critical." If you're deemed critical, you do not have to take unpaid leave days. You can bank those days. In my judgement, I think most employees will say, "Listen, I'd like to be deemed critical, because if I can be deemed critical, I can bank the days."

We cannot, by the way, get an answer out of the government about what the definition of "critical" will be. Our opinion is that this is going to represent a substantial delay of payments. We're going to see many employees—I've heard as many as half the employees in the province could say: "I'm critical. I'm deemed critical, so I am going to bank my leave days." That could represent a deferred payment of up to \$3 billion. That payment will come due at the end of this contract.

Hon Mr Cooke: Nonsense, absolute nonsense.

Mr Phillips: The Minister of Education says "nonsense," but we've asked for a definition of "critical." What we hear is that we will not have a definition of "critical" until well after the bill is passed.

The second thing, as I said earlier, that is of concern to us is the unprecedented intrusion into collective bargaining. What's happened here, and only time will tell, as I think many of the backbench members of the NDP know, is that this bill steps right into the middle of collective bargaining, and particularly on the sectoral agreements.

What we're going to find is that there is only one person who can deem whether a sectoral agreement has been reached or not. There doesn't have to be any indication of whether half the employees may agree to that or half the employers may agree to that. Only one person can determine when a sectoral agreement has been reached. I believe there will be several sectoral agreements reached where there is not majority support within that sector for it. Only the Minister of Finance is able to finally agree on that sectoral agreement.

Again, it may be that people say, "Well, these are tough times and that's a price worth paying." It's worth paying only if there wasn't a better alternative, which I've outlined earlier. What you're going to find is that this is unprecedented intrusion, where the Minister of Finance will determine there is a sectoral agreement reached even when there may not be support within that

sector. That sectoral agreement, believe me, will have enormous impact on local agreements. You may say, "That's fine; too bad," but that's going to be the case.

The ministerial authority: I'm quite surprised the NDP backbench members would not have raised their voices about this, where they are going to allow a minister to determine when a collective agreement has been reached. It won't be as a result of votes within the sector and it won't be a result of any taking it back to the membership; it will be the minister. The minister has already, I gather, unilaterally determined that there is a sectoral agreement in one sector.

The third concern is the time lines. I would say that Premier Rae has particularly put the union leadership under enormous pressure. We are now less than four weeks away from when the agreements have to be reached. The gun is very much to the parties' heads. Many of you have been in collective bargaining. I've been involved in collective bargaining. When you are trying to reach a collective agreement with a gun to your head and working on those kinds of time lines, I don't think sensible collective bargaining is going to go on.

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The next point I wanted to talk a little bit about is the drafting of the bill and the way the bill's worded. Here we are and we're dealing with the most important piece of legislation, I think we all agree, that we will see here in the Legislature in this session, or in the lives of all of us in this government. Yet the bill, it's clear to anyone, has been drafted hastily. I hope the government backbenchers realize that it was just late yesterday afternoon that we saw some very substantial amendments introduced five minutes before we began the final debate, less than two hours before the debate was finished on clause-by-clause. I think that's an indication, I hope it's an indication, to the government members of the problems of this bill, and I think we've only just begun to see the problems of the bill. I don't think anything could be clearer than the number of amendments that we've seen from the government, of the problems of it.

I also think that we've yet to see the fallout from the provision of the bill that calls for certain employers to pay money to the government, employers that get nothing from the government. We're going to see, for example—I think Hydro is required to provide \$100 million. There's only one way Hydro can get the \$100 million: You've got to do it through rates. There is no other solution.

It isn't a question of the government giving less to certain groups; it is the government's going to be asking certain groups to provide money to it. There will be an interesting debate in Metropolitan Toronto. The bill calls for the Metropolitan Toronto School Board to provide probably between \$90 and \$100 million to the province, and the Metro school board gets nothing in

grants. So the bill provides for the government to say, "Listen, you've got to give us that \$100 million."

I think there will be an interesting debate because I'm not sure the public yet are aware of that. There will be many cases where it isn't a question of the province cutting back on the money that it's giving to jurisdictions; it will be a case where the province will be requesting money from the government that has been raised through, for example, property taxes.

I want to comment briefly as well on the challenges that we face as a result of the Conservative Party's position on this. I realize their position was quite different than ours. At what we call second reading here, as you know, Mr Speaker, they determined that they were going to support the bill and hope that amendments could be made to fix the bill. I understand the reasons for doing that. I think it was unfortunate, because what I ran into was that it added credibility to the bill and many people—I said, "Listen, we've got real problems with the bill"—would say to me, "I don't understand why you've got real problems with the bill, because the Conservative Party is supporting the bill." I guess we felt all along the bill was fatally flawed.

I think the Conservative Party now appreciates that the government had no intention of listening to amendments. The Conservative Party presented, I think, 29 amendments. The government adopted none of them. They were dismissed. I feel it was, as I said earlier, unfortunate that the Conservative Party chose that approach because it added credibility to the bill.

If we're right, and only time will tell—the reason we keep Hansards around here is because it allows all of us to remind each other of what we've said. It probably will be six months to a year before the true impact of this bill is felt. I'm looking forward to that discussion. If it works as the government says it will—and of course we don't think it will; we think it is fatally flawed—I appreciate that the government will say, "Well, we were right and you were wrong," but for all the reasons I've talked about, I think it will delay payments.

For example, the government is delaying payments into pensions of \$500 million a year for three years. They say, "As a result of this bill, we don't need to make payments into the pensions of \$500 million a year." The teachers' pension fund, as I think most people know, has a substantial unfunded liability. We've asked for confirmation—in fact, the Premier indicated that he was going to provide that confirmation—that the teachers' pension board has looked at the calculations and agrees with the government.

Hon Mr Cooke: That's why they're meeting.

Mr Phillips: The Minister of Education says that's why they're meeting. The problem is that we're dealing with the bill, and we'll vote on it in less than two hours,

and we've yet to have confirmation of that. If by any chance the savings aren't there in the pensions, we will have spent \$500 million for the next three years, each and every year, of money that should have gone to the pension. We will have taken that money out of the pension fund.

Hon Mr Cooke: You're absolutely wrong.

Mr Phillips: The Minister of Education says I'm wrong. All you've got to do is do what the Premier promised. The Premier promised we would have from the pension plan confirmation that those funds aren't needed.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): Are you not delaying the contributions?

Hon Mr Cooke: No.

Mr Phillips: The minister says they're not delaying the contributions. For example, just last year in the budget they delayed a payment into the teachers' pension fund of \$500 million for three months. They called that a rescheduling of cash payments. That cost the taxpayers of Ontario \$50,000 a day, every single day, in an interest penalty; \$50,000 a day completely wasted. It was money that should never have been spent. And you wonder why we ask these questions. You wonder why we might like from the Premier what was promised.

Hon Mr Cooke: Because you're comparing apples and oranges, and you know it.

Mr Phillips: The minister cannot deny it: The payments were delayed for three months, and it cost the taxpayers a \$50,000-a-day penalty, wasted money, every day for three months.

So the minister may ask why we're raising these questions; it's for those specific reasons. We are going to be voting in less than two hours on a bill that promises to remove planned payments of \$500 million a year for each of the next three years into the pension fund, and we've had no confirmation that that's actuarially sound. I hope it is, but I would have thought the government would have had the courtesy to tell the opposition parties and to share with us the numbers, and you haven't done that. The Premier promised he would do that.

Hon Mr Cooke: Because we actually have to use the legislation that's in place, and you know it. There has to be a pension partners meeting, and the pension partners go through the process.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr Phillips: All we're asking for is confirmation. We have a belief that the bill will in many respects delay payments and not reduce them.

I think there's a fairness issue in this as well. If it's true that a large number of employees in the province will be deemed critical and will be allowed simply to

bank their days while others will be required to take a 5% reduction in their remuneration, I think we're opening up an enormous fairness issue. But there it is, and it's clear in the bill.

We've asked for a definition of "critical," and we've been told, "Sorry, that will come; you'll get that when you see the regulations." Of course, the regulations will come well after we've been asked to vote on the bill.

The fail-safe amendments: I guess I understand why they're there. There has to be, I gather, some conclusion to all of this process. But here we are on July 7, and the 9,000 collective agreements have to be reached within a month. I guess they've got until August 10 to agree to that. That's a time frame that is—"difficult" is probably too soft a word. I'm afraid it's going to be impossible for groups to reach sensible, negotiated agreements within that time frame, and what we'll have then are either agreements that were reached in haste that don't make sense, or we'll have the two parties at loggerheads because there simply isn't the time to reach the agreement. And then the hammer comes down, because there is a \$400-million penalty: If you don't have your agreement by essentially August 1, the government will take \$400 million out of the fund.

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So here's where we are now. We have a bill that, in our opinion, is flawed. The government will obviously argue that it's going to work. We don't think it will work, for all the reasons I've outlined.

The government has said that if you are in favour of restraint, you're in favour of the social contract. Frankly, that's one of the challenges we've had, because there is no doubt there is broad, broad support for restraint; there is no doubt that the mood of the public is one of restraint. People are feeling very threatened. There's no doubt about that, and I think every political party in the country understands that and is supportive of that. So the social contract has become a metaphor, and it's actually an interesting exercise for me to watch how a goal of restraint, which we all support, can be used to get through a bill that I think is very flawed.

I'm surprised at particularly the NDP backbenchers that they are not substantially more concerned about this bill. I understand that you've been told that the social contract is the only way for restraint. I say to you that there's a better way. I think you're going to find that as people become more aware of the content of the bill—and I've been pleased to see that others are joining the issue. I think many of the union leadership have pointed out some of the problems, but the Toronto board of trade has had an opportunity to really get into the bill and raise some very key issues. It isn't just the union leadership; some of our senior business people in the province now are looking at the bill and finding the flaws in it.

As I say, the problem has been that to date, this bill

has been seen as what I call a metaphor for restraint, but I predict that in the next three to four months, as people become more aware of what the bill really does, people are going to really wonder how the Legislature ever passed a bill like this.

This may get the government hooting and hollering, but I think the leadership of the union movement has been put into a tough spot.

Hon Mr Cooke: That's been a major concern of yours all your political life.

Mr Phillips: The minister once again is heckling, but I would say that the union leadership has been put into a very tough spot here. I still remember this: The Minister of Finance came to our finance committee meeting in late February and said, "Things are on track, as we said they would be." That was in late February, and members from the committee will remember that. The minister said, "Things are as we said they would be." It was five weeks later that I found out that Premier Rae said: "No, it's all different. It's far worse than we thought. The deficit is now \$17 billion, and we are going to have a social contract and we're going to have it right away."

Now, for any of you who are involved in collective bargaining, you'll know how challenging it is to make those kinds of reductions with your membership in that time frame.

I know the government is in a tough position with the finances. I know this bill is the result of a set of processes that have led us here. I think the bill essentially takes the collective bargaining that was going on, which was finally terminated when several of the parties left, and tries to incorporate it in the legislation.

But I will say to them that the fallout of this, whether you like it or not, is that you have damaged the credibility of the union leadership. There's no doubt about that. The problem with the NDP is that it doesn't appreciate, I don't think, that members on all sides of the House have had many experiences, and I understand the challenges the union leadership faces.

To begin to conclude my remarks, this bill is fundamentally flawed, and the Minister of Education and Training in the end will pay for it. It's he, I gather, who's pushing it. It's he who's heckling someone who's trying to raise legitimate issues. It's he who likes to holler and hoot in here. Rather than debate the merits of the bill, he'd rather heckle.

I will say that our party from the outset, from the time we saw this bill and examined it, believed it was fundamentally flawed. Time will prove we were right. The NDP back bench, for whatever reason, has been, I gather, brought into line, but as you live with your conscience on this bill, you will have real questions with yourselves.

We will obviously be voting against it. We will take

advantage of the opportunities to debate it with someone like the Minister of Education, who is proudly moving forward with this bill, who likes to heckle but will have to live with the consequences of this.

We look forward to the vote this afternoon. We do not look forward to the consequences of this bill, which we think will not do what it was planned to do and will actually do the opposite. And we look forward to an opportunity, I hope, to find ways in which we can correct the damage that will be done by the bill.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): The opening comments by the Minister of Finance reflected on the seriousness of the present fiscal crisis this province finds itself in, and I will say from the outset that our party, the PC Party, has no doubt about the seriousness of this fiscal crisis. It is well known to the international banking community; indeed, one of the problems this government is having is placing its bonds, and it will have continued difficulty in rolling over debt.

I've listened very attentively to both the Minister of Finance and to the Liberal Finance critic. Unfortunately, the Liberal Finance critic ignored the most important aspect: What would you do?

We know the Liberals brought us into a very serious situation. Let us reflect back on the fact that this is the government that, when it was in power, told us going into the election that it was going to have a surplus. In fact, we know there was a significant deficit when it left office. They had hidden that from the electorate and there was a great deal of anger at the fact that this government, their government, would have done this.

Now let's turn to the present fiscal crisis. There can be no doubt that we must make serious reductions in government expenditures. I don't care which party is in power; these reductions must be made. We must live within our means. Successive governments of all political stripes have spent more than they have taken in; unfortunately, it has come home to roost now and our children and our grandchildren will be paying for this.

The PC Party supported the principle of Bill 48, that being the question of cost reduction of government and deficit reduction. Yes, we supported the principle and we still support that principle and in fact we have offered concrete alternatives. The sign of those concrete alternatives is that we offered 29 substantive amendments, and the government in its wisdom decided it was going to vote against all of those amendments. Some of those amendments flowed directly from those parties who will be affected by these cuts by the government. They were an effort to get the government to accept that there is a responsibility not just to the taxpayer but also to those people who are affected by this legislation. The PC Party put aside all partisan politics and offered those solutions, and those amendments were absolutely voted down by the government.

1630

Our concern is that Bill 48 in its present form does not achieve the government spending reductions they talk about. In fact this government, if you read carefully the budget this year and take into account the little tiny asterisks beside some numbers, is spending more money than it spent last year, and last year was the record amount that it spent in history.

This government does not have a problem with revenue, it has a problem with its expenditures. We were told by the Minister of Finance that they were spot on in their financial projections only a few months ago, only to find that they were not spot on, they were drastically off.

No government can afford the kind of level of spending that this government is involved in. They are spending in excess of \$10 billion more than they're taking in in revenues this year. They would have you believe that they're spending less, but it simply is not true, because you must add in the amount of money which is taken off book.

We know that many of the problems the present government has were inherited from the previous Liberal government. This was the government which increased expenditures in all fields and increased the civil service by 9,000 people, yet we hear no solutions from the Liberals as to how they would address that. Not one single amendment.

It is unfair, I would suggest to you, to suggest that the reductions should be even across the field. Those people who have been subject to expenditure restraint for many years should not be hit with the same amount of reduction. I will take, for example, the fact that the doctors, after many years of restraint, are facing essentially a 25% reduction. Why should they be facing that when the rest of the public sector is facing a 5% reduction? Why is the government turning its back on negotiations with the Ontario Medical Association?

It seems reasonable that we should be looking, for example, at hospitals that have already achieved efficiency and are a lean operating machine. They should not be hit with the same amount of reductions as those hospitals which are in fact operating inefficiently. This government, I would suggest, already has the numbers on a per-procedure basis as to how efficient each hospital is.

I will turn now to the question of hospital closures and layoffs which will flow directly from this government's legislation. If they were to sit down with the OMA and all of the other affected parties, the nurses and the unions, I am confident that we would be able to find significant cost reductions, for example, by cutting the medical card fraud out.

The suggestion that \$30,000 a year should be the cutoff point at which anybody will receive a reduction

is wrong. We should move the burden all across the board. Those people who are earning \$500 a day but are working less than 60 days per year will get no reduction.

Let me turn now to the question of Metro property taxpayers. Any reduction achieved through the social contract of the cost to Metro schools, the government is suggesting that amount of money should be sent back to the government. This is unconscionable. That money belongs to the property taxpayers of Toronto.

The government set up the Fair Tax Commission, and the Fair Tax Commission has come forward with a suggestion that it is unfair to raise education taxes through property taxes, yet this government, which has spent \$2.3 million on the Fair Tax Commission, is now ignoring the Fair Tax Commission's recommendations. This is unfair to the property taxpayers of Toronto. Those savings should be remitted back to the property taxpayers.

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I think I want to begin my short remarks with respect to the government's social contract legislation by indicating to everyone in this House and those watching on TV that these are not easy times, of course, in the province of Ontario. They're not easy times to be in government or to be in opposition. But I think what we've seen over the last few weeks with respect to this legislation, Bill 48, is a difference between the three parties at Queen's Park.

The government says it wanted to consult, that it was willing to entertain some amendments to Bill 48, and we in the Ontario PC party took up that challenge, unlike the Liberal Party, which decided to offer no alternatives whatsoever, unlike the Liberal Party, which decided several weeks ago that it didn't want in any way to be part of the social contract process, that it would not be constructive and that it simply would not go to the bother and the time and energy required to come up with its own amendments to help make this legislation more workable and more fair.

I and my colleagues in the Ontario PC party voted in favour of Bill 48 on second reading, and it hasn't been easy. I've lost a couple of friends. I resent when the Liberal Party gets up and says that we've been playing games with respect to this legislation, because, I'll tell you, we haven't been playing games. We've taken some very tough political hits from teachers and nurses and doctors and pharmacists and a whole pile of other people in the greater public sector. It's been tough on us personally. It has required a great deal of time and energy on our part to try and make the government's social contract legislation more fair and workable.

It's unfortunate that at the end of the day the government refused, along with its Liberal cohorts, to accept any of our amendments. I, as the Ontario PC Health critic, along with my colleague Mr Cousens, the mem-

ber for Markham, introduced a number of amendments yesterday during committee of the whole House on behalf of a number of very special and important groups in the greater public sector with respect to health care.

We introduced amendments on behalf of the Ontario Medical Association, and those amendments were rejected by the NDP and the Liberals. We introduced amendments on behalf of the Ontario Nurses' Association, and those amendments were rejected by the Liberals and the NDP. We introduced amendments on behalf of the Ontario Pharmacists' Association, and those amendments unfortunately were rejected by both the government and the official opposition. We introduced amendments on behalf of the Ontario Hospital Association, and those amendments were rejected by both the government and the Liberal opposition party.

The Liberal opposition party yesterday—I found it very interesting—in trying to flip around and deal with this issue, we had the member for Oriole standing up and in her spot trying to make up amendments, after several weeks of saying that they would have nothing to do with this process, that they would not be in any way constructive.

I think the Liberals have played the politics of the past. If there's one clear message I've got from my constituents, the people of Simcoe West, and people throughout the province, it is that they're tired of the politics of the past. They want opposition parties to put forward alternatives, to put forward constructive amendments to government legislation.

We take that job seriously here in the Ontario PC party. We're disappointed that the Liberals continue to play the politics of the past and we are disappointed sincerely that the government didn't accept any of our 29 amendments. I thought, and I guess it was naive in hindsight, that the government would at least accept some of our amendments to make Bill 48 more humane: more humane for teachers, more humane for physicians, more humane for many other professionals and good people in the greater public sector. The government talks a great line about consultation, it talks a great line about wanting to entertain our amendments, but at the end of the day yesterday we saw that the government and the Liberals rejected all of our amendments.

As I said, it wasn't easy to support this legislation on second reading, because we knew that the politically expedient thing to do would probably be to do what the Liberals opted to do, and that would be to simply say, "We want nothing to do with this legislation." But we took the hits, we took the time to introduce amendments and we did the very best we could to try to bring fairness to this legislation.

We are disappointed. I hope that those in my riding who indicated they were no longer going to support me because of the stand we took on second reading, which is the reading of the bill in which you stand up for

principles and be counted or you simply play the politics of the past, will now understand that we in earnest tried to bring the government around to a commonsense approach to this legislation, and we were not successful at the end of the day. But I'm proud to say, and I think my colleagues share in that pride, that we weren't afraid to bring forward amendments on behalf of groups in the medical professions, as example.

1640

I want to end my comments by reading what the social contract means to the Ontario Medical Association. I'm going to quote from the June 1993 edition of the Medical Times because I think it's very important that these remarks be put on the record:

"The government is using its current fiscal situation as an opportunity to pass insidious legislation that would give it unprecedented powers to ration virtually any insured, medically necessary service as it sees fit," said OMA president Dr Tom Dickson at a news conference held on June 15. "Under this legislation, there are no limits on what services can be restricted by government—it applies to everyone and everything.

"Clearly, government was hoping the public wouldn't notice," said Dickson. "If this legislation is passed, it will have a significant impact on patients and the public generally."

"He pointed out that implementation of the social contract and the expenditure control plan legislation would destroy the constructive relationship developed between government and doctors over the last several years.

"The master agreement we signed with the NDP government in 1991, touted by Premier Bob Rae and former Health minister Frances Lankin as groundbreaking, has saved hundreds of millions of dollars and greatly improved the management and delivery of health care services," said Dickson. "Now, two years later, the government is reneging on its part of the deal and overriding every single part of an agreement that they themselves bargained."

"Dickson said the credibility and integrity of the Premier are directly at issue. Two years ago, before he was elected, Bob Rae told the OMA board of directors:

"There is no fairness in a system that allows the government to dictate unilaterally your level of pay. A monolithic system, in which one insurer has all the political cards, can't work without checks and balances. Professions free to speak out on the quality of care; a partnership in which planning decisions about the system emerge from a genuine dialogue, and not from the cabinet room alone; above all a sense of fairness and pluralism when it comes to the management of the system; these are all essential if the health care system is to maintain the confidence of everyone working in it, as well as the public it serves. Fair arbitration between

the professions and the government is critical in creating a more open health care system. You have a right to it, under international law, and under every standard of natural justice.”

The Premier said that to the OMA just a couple of years ago, and of course the social contract does the exact opposite.

Finally, I want to say to all those who were questioning the principles we stood up for in supporting this legislation on second reading that we continue to stand by those principles, that we have to reduce the cost and size of government, and we need permanent reductions in the cost and size of government.

Government must get its fiscal house in order. It's a message we have begged the government to listen to. When they told us over the past two and a half years you could somehow spend yourself rich, spend yourself out of a recession, we very clearly said to the government: “You cannot do that. Please come around to our way of thinking and our way of commonsense management.”

On second reading, we had an opportunity to stand up for those principles. We did that. We then, during committee hearings, had the opportunity to improve the legislation, to make sure that it actually adhered to those principles. At the end of the day, the government didn't listen, and we have legislation that's badly flawed. We are not, then, able to support it on third reading.

But I want to say to teachers and those people in whom I found over the last few weeks that there seemed to be a lack of believability that the government would actually go ahead with the social contract legislation, we felt it necessary to introduce commonsense amendments because we believe the government is going and will go ahead with this legislation and enact it, if necessary. Tonight at 5:45, we will see the government use its majority to do exactly that.

I also had to point out to people that the Premier and the Treasurer very clearly said that they're not going to let the deficit rip above the \$10-billion deficit projected this year, that the government has already built in its \$2 billion in savings and that the social contract will go at the end of the day. We tried to be constructive and I'm sorry that it had to end this way.

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): I think we find ourselves in history in the province of this country in a place where we've never been before and I hope we'll never have to go in the future. But I certainly know that this government has opened the door for future governments to take full control over collective bargaining in any sector in the province of Ontario. This is a labour government that has set the precedent that allows governments to reopen collective agreements and to undermine the whole collective bargaining process in the province of Ontario, and I

think anybody who knows that and understands the process is totally shocked.

There were other ways for all of us to work together in this province to meet the goals of not only this government, but, I believe, all the members of this Legislative Assembly as we take a look at the debts and deficits across this country and throughout the provinces and understand that we have to find ways to manage in a more effective way. At a time when this province was looking for leadership, was looking for a government to stand up and say, “Enough is enough,” and to work with the groups so that we could come to some conclusion around how we were going to meet the demands—and that was to cut spending in the province of Ontario—this government has failed significantly.

They actually think they're showing leadership, and what they're really doing is coming up with a social contract that is so complicated and so difficult to implement, so difficult to deal with for all the municipalities, school boards, hospital boards, police services boards, local authorities, that they'll never ever recover, I think, from the actions they're taking today.

Number one, they've given the opposition parties absolutely no opportunity to present amendments that could be significantly and seriously considered. They showed that yesterday when the Treasurer of the province said, “What does this mean?” with regard to one of our amendments that talked about looking at the completion date of any collective agreement whereby some change would be implemented. That is something we could have discussed and it's something we were willing to do. We gave it our best shot, given the amount of time we've got.

I think this government knows that its socialist agenda has failed. They came in and tried to spend their way out of a recession. They hired all kinds of political staff. They've contributed to the difficult situation. Now they understand that their socialist agenda with regard to spending their way out of a recession did not work. They have never stood up and said, “We failed and we need your help.” Instead, they've come up with this contract, unprecedented in the province, and they have left the real work up to the municipalities, the school boards, the hospitals, the colleges, the police boards and on and on and on. They are the ones that are going to have to work with the result of this piece of legislation.

I want to take one minute to talk about one section of this particular bill that has to do with school boards. It's section 33.1. Just so they know how the interest groups feel about this, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association has said: “Unless school boards are free to negotiate with unions when collective agreements expire during the social contract term, they will be faced with two undesirable options: to cut student programs and services or to hike local property taxes. Both scenarios are unacceptable.”

Hon Mr Cooke: That section was amended, Dianne.

Mrs Cunningham: The minister's telling me they fixed it up. I'll tell him how to fix it up. I know we can work together, Mr Minister.

Hon Mr Cooke: It's already been amended. It was amended yesterday.

Mrs Cunningham: I know you amended it yesterday. We're leaving it to the regulations. I'm hoping you will support me in my recommendations today. I hope we can talk about it in the future. It's extremely important that we do.

Somebody said to me earlier today, "Do you trust this government to come up with regulations behind closed doors that will meet the needs of the young people across this province?" I have to say that there are a lot of people who just simply don't. But the Minister of Education and Training is sitting and listening. We've had a good working relationship and I'm going to put a couple of suggestions on the agenda today.

Here's one of them: If in fact we have to live with section 33.1—through you, Mr Speaker, to the minister—then could we at the very same time say that in those regulations, you will exclude staffing levels? Because without excluding staffing levels the school boards have nowhere to go. There just isn't the opportunity, especially with the small boards, to find the dollars they need.

Hon Mr Cooke: Read the amendment.

Mrs Cunningham: The minister is saying, "Read the amendment." I have to tell you that I did read the amendments, but between 6 and 6:30 last night, and I will read them again. If I'm wrong, I stand to be corrected, but what I'm saying is that in the regulations—he has said he's telling me that he will exclude staffing levels. If that's what he's saying—

Hon Mr Cooke: I said read the amendment. The amendment's very clear.

Mrs Cunningham: The amendment's very clear: to exclude staffing levels. We're having this conversation across the floor, but that's fine, Mr Minister; we do that frequently, and it's usually in good faith.

The second one is this: We must have consultation. None of us understands this process. The process we have gone through as this bill has evolved has been backwards. Normally, in legislation that is well-thought-out, you would have the legislation, you would look at the regulations, you would have consultation. We've not done it.

1650

Mr Speaker, we've done it all backwards, and you know and so does the minister know that we had a few minutes yesterday to consider these amendments, just a few minutes on this important piece of legislation. If the minister is listening to me today, and I know he is, the school boards, the hospitals, the colleges, the univer-

sities, everyone, must have consultation around the regulations that will go with this particular piece of legislation.

In conclusion, because I know that time is most valuable, I have to say that with regard to the municipalities, this government has not met with the mayors of the larger municipalities, has not met with the regional chairpersons. They are working on Tuesday night next week to take a look at this legislation and give advice on the regulations. All I can say is that they had better very carefully listen to the people who will have to implement this bill with regard to managing what they're responsible for in the municipalities, school boards etc.

This government has simply passed the buck. They want the citizens of Ontario to truly believe that they have shown restraint. What they have really done is to pass that responsibility on to all of the other elected agencies and boards and commissions across this province, some of them appointed, and say: "Here it is. Here are the rules. You live with them." They're going to have a very difficult time.

It's a very disappointing time in this province, to take a look at a labour government that has interfered with the collective bargaining process unlike any other government in the past and has passed that precedent on to future governments. It's with significant disappointment that I speak this afternoon, when in fact they did have a solution. We did our best to provide them with the solution, and we were interested in working with this government. Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): I would like to reiterate that I and the Progressive Conservative Party are in favour of any initiatives that will reduce government spending; initiatives that are permanent, not temporary in nature; initiatives that are fair and workable.

I would like to make a few comments in the time left with regard to the impact of the social contract on the municipalities, because this bill is unworkable as it pertains to municipalities. It does not give municipalities the tool to deal with the cuts that the government is imposing on the municipalities.

The government has proposed that a freeze on wages be imposed on the municipal sector. I can tell you, almost all the municipalities are already a step ahead of this government: They have already imposed freezes on their staff; there will be no savings in that regard because they have already done that.

This legislation suggests a pause day. In that regard, had the pause day been implemented on April 1, it might have been effective to some degree in addressing the shortfall in funding that is going to accrue to the municipalities. But with the delay that's taken place, it

will be simply impossible for the municipalities to save the amount of money they're going to have reduced upon them through pause days.

In addition, those under \$30,000 are excluded. In addition, critical functions probably—although we don't know for sure, but probably—such as police, fire, ambulance drivers, perhaps homes for the aged employees, day care workers, will also be excluded. Their time will be banked and there will be a day of reckoning at some point after the social contract expires to pay for them.

Simply put, these initiatives will not work. We recommended a 5% rollback. The GTA mayors, I might say, agreed with the Progressive Conservatives. The GTA mayors indicated that there should be an across-the-board reduction of wages of politicians, employees and workers of municipalities. That would have addressed the problem. The initiatives that the government has put forward won't.

What will happen, regardless of what is stated in this bill, is that municipalities will have to compensate. The way they'll compensate will be through a number of factors, such as a few pause days but also including layoffs, including raiding of reserves, including postponing capital funding and including privatization of various functions. It is interesting that this government, a social government, has brought in steps that will result in the privatization of certain functions in the municipal sector.

That is one of the reasons I'm not supporting this bill.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): With some regret, I rise to speak on third reading of Bill 48 today, the government's social contract legislation. Not 24 hours ago, my caucus and I sat in this Legislature and we watched the government use its majority, with the help of the Liberals, to defeat 29 constructive amendments that would have made this legislation more fair, would have made this legislation workable.

Had those amendments passed, I would be giving a very different speech today, and we could have been voting in favour of this legislation today as well. I realize that's not particularly relevant to the government because it has the majority to jam through whatever it is that it wants.

From day one, though, my caucus has clearly and consistently pushed this government on the issue of restraint. We believe that government is too big. We believe it's too broad. We believe it costs too much. For five years of Liberal government and for two and a half, close to three years of NDP government, we have been trying to point this out.

Taxpayers, quite frankly—it's obvious now to most, except the Liberals perhaps—can no longer afford to foot the bill, and future generations of taxpayers cannot

afford the bill for unacceptably high deficits and debt. That is clearly the stage we're at today.

That's why we voted in favour of Bill 48 on second reading. We indeed encouraged the government to bring forward legislation so that it could have meaningful negotiations. We didn't think the unions thought this government was serious, and it turns out that they didn't think the government was serious. I guess they'll find out today that it is, and we think it's important that they understand that.

We supported the principle of restraint, and of course we still do. We knew the bill was not perfect, so we set about to amend it. We served notice that we supported the principle and we would propose amendments, hopefully to get passed, to make it better.

We consulted with unions. We consulted with those who will feel the effects of the legislation, our social contract partners, management and employers and employees, hospitals, school boards, universities, colleges, municipalities—all the transfer partners that get money from this government—and of course with OPSEU members themselves.

The result of our efforts were 29 constructive amendments that would have addressed some of the fundamental principles that we believe restraint legislation should recognize, and I'll get into that in a minute.

I want to say that I'm proud of the efforts of my caucus in attempting to constructively amend Bill 48. I'm proud of the efforts put forward by the member for Markham in carrying this bill for us in the Legislature, as I am of all the members of our caucus in dealing with the various critic areas and with the various interest groups: the member for London North with colleges and universities and with teachers; certainly the member for Simcoe West, who played a leadership role with those in the medical field, the doctors, the pharmacists and those concerned hospitals; indeed, all the members of our caucus.

I want to tell you, I'm proud of them. I'm proud of the effort they put forward to make this a workable bill with the amendments. I congratulate them for that. I believe very much, as my caucus has believed, that it is much better to have tried and failed than to have never tried at all.

1700

When I took over the leadership of my party, I promised a new kind of leadership. The public was calling for a new kind of leadership, a new kind of politics. I pledged to be a constructive opposition, not just an opposition that criticizes or opposes for the sake of opposing but one that would offer alternatives, one that would support when a government deserves support, one that would criticize, yes, when it needed criticizing, but then would propose alternatives with those criticisms.

I believe the public expects that from its politicians, and I therefore expected nothing less from my caucus. I want to tell you, I got nothing less than that. They did not disappoint me and I don't think they have disappointed their constituents or the people of this province.

I am disappointed by the fact that others in this Legislature have continued to play the politics of the past. Had the government been receptive to our amendments—not one out of 29, after saying, “Oh, we welcome input, we welcome advice”—many of those amendments our own, many of them put forward with the support of both management and unions of the various transfer partners. Had you been receptive to those, we could have voted for this bill this afternoon.

We will continue to fight for the principles of restraint. We'll continue to fight in a commonsense way and we will support any measure that achieves that end in a fair and workable way. In the case of Bill 48, we would have said yes to genuine restraint. We would have said yes to the permanent structural downsizing of an unsustainably large public sector, particularly if that downsizing had been in a planned, phased-in program over three years, as our amendments proposed, and particularly in conjunction with a planned program of upsizing the private sector, which we've also proposed, something that this government has totally ignored.

We would have said yes to a serious bid to reduce Ontario's deficit, which, quite frankly, now threatens the foundations of our very way of life in this province of Ontario. We would have said yes today to a workable, manageable program that led to carefully planned, long-term reform of our public institutions. We would have said yes today to any measure that accomplished these goals fairly and equitably.

Unfortunately, in its final form, Bill 48 does not do this. There is no guarantee of permanence in downsizing in the cost and the size of government. There is no assurance of reform in the way that government services are going to be delivered. There is far too much power given to the government, far too much unlimited power, both by the regulation and in the bill, to the Minister of Finance.

I hope that power is never used and I hope the minister, when he persuaded his colleagues in caucus by saying, “Don't worry, we won't do all the things the bill says we can do, that all the critics are saying; don't worry, we won't do that”—I hope that's true. If it is, I don't know why he wouldn't accept our amendments to limit the power.

But when you're dealing in trying to find fairness, when you're dealing with people's lives and their livelihoods and their families and their futures, I believe that power is abusive, far too excessive for any piece of legislation, and that's why we proposed amendments to limit that.

The tragedy is, Bill 48 could have been a very workable bill; there is no question about that. That's why we moved no fewer than 29 amendments to the legislation, each of which is now a matter of record.

The amendments were a product of a number of things. The first was goodwill. Unlike both the government and the other opposition party, we brought goodwill to bear in this debate in the very sincere belief that members of this House were prepared to work together towards a common goal.

We were mistaken. In the area of goodwill, we were alone. The government chose not to work with us: not one phone call, not one meeting, not anything in response to our phone calls to the Premier and the sharing of draft amendments, no discussions either inside the House or outside the House and limited debate in the House. The Liberals chose not to work at all. I say, so much for goodwill in this place from the other two parties. Both of them ought to be ashamed.

The second key ingredient in our effort to make Bill 48 workable and effective and fair through our amendments was imagination. Why lay off current employees when you could instead stop hiring new ones? We proposed this numerous times over the last four months. Why strip contracts when you could sustain them? Why penalize inefficiency when you could instead reward efficiency? Why punish whistle-blowers when you could protect them? Why ransack government programs when you could reinvent them and redeliver them more effectively?

We offered imaginative amendments that could have done these things throughout this debate. Each and every one of those amendments was rejected out of hand. So I say, so much for imagination and courage in this place from the other two parties.

The third element we brought in the battle to salvage Bill 48 was conviction. Unlike the New Democrats, we didn't learn the language or meaning of restraint overnight. We Progressive Conservatives have consistently spoken this language and we have understood its meaning for a long time.

You know, Mr Speaker, one of the things we are dealing with is what has happened in the last eight years. I hold now before me in my hand the government of Ontario phone book that lists all the employees of the government of Ontario. It is this big, it is this thick and it has about 600 pages. When we left office, this is the number of employees who were in the government. After seven years of restraint, of downsizing, of learning how to do things more efficiently using technology, computer-age, new management techniques, as the private sector was doing, we had downsized government by 7,000 employees.

We don't come to this debate overnight. We brought a lot of experience to bear, experience that the Liberals

and New Democrats needed, because you have no experience in doing anything other than hiring, spending, taxing, upsizing, making government bigger.

We brought our experience and our expertise in managing effectively, in how you do things more efficiently, in how you provide better quality services with fewer dollars because we lived that walk. We walked it and we did it for a number of years. We are prepared to do it again. We are prepared to share our expertise with this Legislature.

What happened? Look at the government phone book after the Liberals left office. Look at how much bigger it is. Look at the thickness of the pages, another 200 pages added. Now with the New Democrats, we look at the size of it there. Look at the size of the books now. All they knew how to do was to hire, to promise new things, new programs, tax more, spend more, borrow more.

We brought our expertise to them—we offered to share it—on how to downsize at the same time as protecting programs; how to deliver programs more efficiently; how, from 1976 to 1985, before we turned over power to the Liberals, with 7,000 fewer employees we added programs, we delivered programs more efficiently. They did not want our expertise.

The New Democrats, at least today—I admit this—talk the talk; something I admit, I acknowledge, I encourage and my caucus has supported. At least they talk the talk. We supported that talk. We supported the principle of what this bill said it was going to do. We still do support that principle. The principle we supported was to fairly and in a workable way cut the size and cost of government by 5% over three years.

Our amendments allowed us in a fair way and in an equitable way to do that in a permanent way, at the same time learning how to deliver programs more efficiently and restructure the way government does business. Our amendments that made the bill workable and fair were rejected out of hand.

Unfortunately, the NDP, who have learned to talk the talk, who have recognized that restraint must be brought to bear, that their first two years were headed 180 degrees in the wrong direction—as we told them they were, that same direction the Liberals were for the five years before—recognized it but they rejected our advice, they rejected our offer and they brought in and rejected 29 very positive and workable amendments.

The Liberals, by contrast, can't even form the word "restraint." The only word they've mastered in this Legislature since being in opposition is no—no to any principle of restraint, no to their own chance to make it work, no to the efforts to make it work, no to all the transfer partners, to all the amendments they put forward, no to the 29 amendments we put forward to make this bill workable and to make it fair. So much for

conviction from the other two parties in this place.

The fourth and final element we brought to bear in this episode was the most important one of all. It was the answer to a basic question: What do Ontarians really want? Briefly, I believe Ontarians want to see a little common sense brought to the management of their affairs in this place—not miracles, not perfection. Listen, we all know, for 42 years of very good government, sound government, restraint government, government that provided hope and opportunity, there were a few mistakes made. We're not asking for perfect government, we're not asking for government without some mistakes, we're not asking for miracles, but we're asking for some sound management and some common sense and we offered that to you in the form of our amendments.

1710

Management means planning in place of panic. It requires first that political leaders anticipate change and prepare for it, not fritter away 42 years of prosperity in five years of the biggest taxing-spending spree this province has ever seen.

The fiscal crisis facing Ontario today was visible on the horizon years ago. The Liberals created it, and then they've chosen to ignore it to this very day, and that is something they will not only have to answer to the people for—we know that—but I tell you that they've got to go home tonight, look at themselves in the mirror and they've got to answer to themselves for the mess they've created and their lack of opportunity of coming forward in a commonsense way and trying, with the new politics the public is asking for, to bring real restraint to bear in this Legislature. You'll have to answer for that as well.

But the New Democrats only worsened the situation in the last two years before realizing what they'd done. It's likewise something that others will one day have the chance to judge. In both cases, where was the planning? That's what Ontarians want: planning, management, common sense. In its final form, Bill 48 gives them none of these things. It could have. It could have given them these things but it does not.

Finally, I want to talk a little bit about the future. We will continue, in spite of our disappointments over Bill 48 and the rejection of our amendments and the rejection of both of the other two parties to work cooperatively and make this place work and make the legislation better. I want to talk about the future, because we will continue, as a caucus, to share our advice with the government, advice it desperately needs on how to be more efficient and how to downsize and how to be fair and how to manage better.

We will continue to share our advice with the government. We'll continue to make positive contributions and alternatives to the government and we will continue to oppose if we think it's going in the wrong direction, but

we will continue to provide whatever expertise, however limited it is, we will continue to provide that to the government as best and honestly and as openly as we possibly can.

I hope very much that the Minister of Finance never uses the awesome power this bill gives him, the awesome power to override, to be unfair, to make unilateral decisions affecting people's lives. Had they accepted our amendments, that power would not be in there. He told his caucus he wouldn't use it. I hope today he'll tell us that he won't use it. I don't know why it's still in the bill, but we could not support legislation that gives that kind of power to a minister. We cannot, so I hope that happens.

I hope as well that this bill, which provides the opportunity for short-term solutions that this bill talks about—I hope they never use those short-term solutions. I hope the groups will come together and negotiate or, if using the legislation, work for long-term, permanent solutions. Had you accepted our amendments, you would have had to do that. You did not and we therefore cannot support this legislation.

However, it is our hope that you have learned from this debate and from the lessons of what we've been telling you and that you will not use the short-term provisions, that you'll seek permanent, long-term downsizing in the size and cost of government. We will continue to support you over the three years when you move in that direction. We will oppose you, of course, when you do not move in that direction.

Because the legislation without our amendments allows these things, we can't support third reading of the bill. We continue, of course, to support the principle. We continue to support the principle of restraint. I offer you, my caucus, all of us to a person: We will continue to help you. We will continue to offer suggestions on how you can cut the size and cost of government permanently, at the same time as delivering quality programs more efficiently, more effectively and with more quality to the citizens of Ontario.

Finally, as disappointed as we are with the final result, if you like, of Bill 48, we give a commitment as well to the people of Ontario, as we give to this Legislature and to the Liberals, if they ever want to be positive and constructive in the future. We give you this commitment: We'll continue to work for fair, effective proposals that will help bring restraint to this province, that will help deal with our deficit, that will help get our runaway tax situation under control, and we'll help with the spending problem that eight years of mismanagement has brought to this province.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): When I first heard, some three months ago, talk about this idea of bringing people together to draft a new kind of social contract, I said, "I don't think you can sit down with some 150 people around a table, 150 people

representing 950,000 other people across a whole variety of different sectors, and expect to seriously carry out meaningful negotiations."

I was told, "Well, Bob Rae is going to bring in legislation to back up the process to make sure the process will work." My response was to say, "I can't even conceive of a piece of legislation which, with one broad brush, would be able to intervene with 9,000 individual collective agreements in any way that could be conceived of as fair and equitable. To that extent, I believe I was right in that initial response to Bob Rae's proposal.

But I had no idea at that time that more than three months later, after the process had indeed broken down, we would be faced with legislation that was this bad. This legislation is legislation which almost no one really supports, and I do not exclude from that statement many of the members opposite, however they may vote today.

It has taken a while for some to understand just how fundamentally flawed this legislation is, how truly bad it is, but it is now universally condemned and it is seen as disastrous by everyone from business leaders to union leaders.

This legislation should have been withdrawn and we would not have faced this vote today. But this government has decided that this is the point on which it is going to stand its ground. This government is prepared to go to the wall to push through legislation which will achieve absolutely none of its goals, which will create more and more chaos—let no one be deceived that this will put an end to the chaos that we have seen for the last three months—and it is legislation which will seriously threaten the financial future of this province.

This is not what political strength is all about. This was supposed to be the government's major effort to restrain government spending, and in fact, ironically, sadly, this legislation is anti-restraint.

We have repeatedly said that this legislation is going to push significant costs—we believe as much as \$3 billion in costs—to some time in the future to make it some other government's responsibility to manage, and we consider that to be absolutely intolerable. The commitment to make those future expenditures could be enshrined in law if this legislation passes the House this afternoon.

1720

This legislation may jeopardize the future funding of pensions. It will certainly strangle the ability of future governments, both local and provincial, to manage, and that is without even considering what will happen when workers across this province seek the wage catch-up which they may well expect.

But more ironically still, this legislation is not even going to achieve the goals of restraint in this budget year. The legislation has given us a process which is

completely unwieldy, which everybody involved in it has said is unworkable and continues to be unworkable.

It is a process which claims to stand in the name of local bargaining but in fact thwarts the ability of people to resolve their issues at a local level in every way. There is little meaningful negotiation taking place now and we are already six months into the contract year.

In fact, we have said, and we continue to believe, that this government can no longer expect to achieve its budget goals through this process in the last six months of the year, and that it needs to go back to the drawing board and look at its own operations to make up the difference for the next six months.

We believe there was a better way. We have said from the very beginning that what this government should do, what this government had a responsibility to do, was to bring in its budget, to set financial targets, which all of us know were going to be difficult financial targets, that it should then negotiate with its own employees to achieve the targets, and it should give other public sector employers and employees the tools they needed to do the same thing.

When it has been suggested in the course of debate over the last weeks that we have not offered an alternative, I could only say that it's because our alternative has been so clear, so straightforward and so consistent from day one. How much clearer could we be?

Let me say that this is not an issue simply for debate and a question of opposition in this place; this is an issue that is affecting some 950,000 people in communities across this province. Let me tell you also, in addition to those 950,000 individuals, there are all of their employers.

Everywhere I go and everywhere that my colleagues have been in the last weeks, they have heard the same thing. They have heard people say, "There is still a better way." In the dying minutes of this debate, I still plead with this government to understand that there is a better way, that employers and employees together are saying: "We understand that these are difficult times. We understand that we are going to have to make reductions in our expenditures. We understand that the financial targets of this government are going to have to be met, as difficult as they are. We understand that we have to be prepared to do our part." But they are saying: "Give us the chance to have a voice in how we will reach those targets. Let us have some say in how we can make these expenditure reductions work for us."

There is no doubt in my mind, as I talk to people who are affected by the social contract discussions and by this legislation, that people truly believe that there was a better way to achieve the government's goals and to still make people feel as though they had some say in the decisions that have such serious impact on their lives.

I hear people feeling frustrated, confused, angry, but most of all what I hear from people is that they feel completely shut out. I believe we could all have had some good faith that people will act responsibly if we are just prepared to give them that chance, and I believe that had the government been willing to give people the opportunity to find their own ways to meet those financial targets, they would have done so with much less chaos than has already been created and with much less future cost.

As I hear the leader of the third party talking about goodwill, I would ask, who has acted with goodwill in this place? To me, real goodwill is having faith that if you put the right process in place, if you give people the chance, they can find good solutions, and that is the kind of goodwill we were looking for. I say that real goodwill and real commitment is understanding what the problems were with this legislation from the very beginning. Real commitment means working for three months, as we in this party have done, to urge this government to do what could be done realistically and practically to put in place a process which would work, to provide leadership that would work. We have not seen that happen, nor have we seen that kind of leadership from the third party. Having said they would support legislation no matter what the legislation looked like, bang, bang, bang, they have struggled since then to try to determine what they could do when they found out that the legislation was indeed bad, bad, bad.

The third party tried, first of all, to put forward what I believe was called the Harris fourth option. This was the first series of proposed alternatives. Of course, they wouldn't have worked. They found that they couldn't work; in fact, the numbers themselves didn't add up. So at the very last minute they substituted a totally new option, a totally new approach, and suddenly the party that said all of this could be solved with a wage freeze and attrition was putting forward an amendment that called for a 5% roll-back in wages. This was an amendment which was literally being written as it was being presented, in what I believe to have been a rather desperate attempt to put a better face on the fact that they had supported a very bad piece of legislation.

We didn't want to talk the talk the leader of the third party has been discussing today. We wanted action that would work to achieve the goals, because we believe the goals of restraint that the government put forward in this budget indeed had to be met and still must be met, but we needed a process that would make it possible for that goal to be achieved.

This legislation was simply too flawed to ever be amended. The third party did not present a series of amendments; it presented a whole new bill. In fact, this bill needed to be withdrawn. This legislation is unworkable. This legislation is indeed anti-restraint.

I want to congratulate my colleagues on having

understood this from the very moment this legislation was presented. I congratulate my colleagues for having firmly and steadily fought to defeat this bill if we were unable to persuade the government to withdraw it.

This legislation is a ticking time bomb of debt. I will be deeply, deeply concerned if this legislation passes today. In the name of restraint, for the sake of the future of this province, this legislation surely must be defeated. We will be unanimous in our opposition to this bill today.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I thank the honourable Leader of the Opposition for her contribution to this debate. Is there further debate?

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Standing order 77(b) reads as follows: "When a bill has been amended in any committee it shall be reprinted as the Clerk of the House directs, amendments being indicated, and shall not be further proceeded with until it has been reprinted and marked 'Reprinted' on the Orders and Notices paper."

Yesterday the committee of the whole amended Bill 48 significantly, and I assume that at some point or other that bill will be reprinted. I look at the Orders and Notices paper today—

The Speaker: I can assist the member. The bill has been reprinted and has been made available to all members. The member does not have a point of order.

Mr Sorbara: If you look at the Orders and Notices today, sir, the bill is not marked "Reprinted."

The Speaker: I appreciate the member's interest in the matter. He will be pleased to know that the bill in fact has been reprinted and has been distributed to all members.

1730

Mr Sorbara: Mr Speaker, I think the rule clearly indicates that it must be marked "Reprinted" in the Orders and Notices before the House can proceed with the next stage. It proceeded with the next stage today, that is, third reading, yet I can just show you here, if I can ask the Clerk Assistant to take it, it is not marked "Reprinted" in the Orders and Notices as required by the standing order.

There was nothing in the time allocation motion that overruled or overrode section 77(b). Therefore, I submit to you, sir, that standing order 77(b) not having been complied with, notwithstanding that the bill may have been reprinted, it has not been marked "Reprinted" in the Orders and Notices. Therefore, rule 77(b) has not been complied with. Therefore, the House does not have the capacity to proceed with third reading of this bill today. Therefore, the vote we are proposing to take at this point is without force and effect.

I refer again, sir, to the fact that the bill is not marked "Reprinted" in the Orders and Notices today, and I think the Clerk will confirm that to you.

The Speaker: As I had suspected, it has been our practice for a considerable length of time that the first item will be to reprint the bill and to provide that to the members. In fact that has been complied with. Therefore, there is no point of order. The member has received the bill. It has been reprinted with all of the amendments. Therefore, it's certainly in order.

Mr Sorbara: If I might just—

The Speaker: I trust the member is not challenging the ruling.

Mr Sorbara: No, I'm not challenging the ruling of the Chair, I'm just saying that I agree with you that the first part of the standing order has been complied with. There's no doubt about that. It's the second part of the standing order, the part that requires that the word "Reprinted" appear in the Orders and Notices, that has not been complied with. That's just evident on the face of the record. I've looked in the Orders and Notices for today. The bill is not marked "Reprinted." Therefore, the standing order hasn't been complied with; therefore, the House is not permitted to proceed with third reading. I just submit that to you for your consideration.

The Speaker: I trust the member will appreciate the fact that the most important thing is to have the bill reprinted with the appropriate amendments. That, of course, has been complied with. It has been our practice to follow that, so indeed there is nothing out of order.

Is there further debate on this bill? The member for York South, the Premier.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): In closing off the debate on third reading on this measure, I want to start by expressing my appreciation to my colleague the member for Nickel Belt.

Politics is a profession and a way of life and I think we can all perhaps understand what I'm saying when I say that there are moments when it brings out perhaps not the best in all of us and there are also moments when it does bring out the best in all of us. I want to say that one of the true joys that I have found in my public life in the last two and a half years has been my association with the Deputy Premier of this government, a person of great common sense, of great good humour, of great perspective and, if I may say so, someone whose judgement and whose common sense I think is something which more and more citizens of this province are coming to understand and to appreciate. This bill stands in his name, and it is a bill which reflects the work of the entire government.

I want to say very clearly to the people of the province, those who are watching and listening to this discussion and to this debate, that the challenges which we face as a province I think have to be seen in the kind of perspective which was presented in the last budget of the government.

That perspective is simply this. We face as a province

a tremendous challenge. We are going through a period of enormous change. Partisanship aside—and I can fully understand that it would be the intention of those on the other side to say that every cent of the money that has been borrowed since September 6, 1990, is the direct fault of the 70-plus members who were elected on this side of the House and that in fact every single nickel that's there in the deficit is the personal responsibility of this Premier and of this Deputy Premier and of all the members on this side. I can understand the political partisanship and the level of rhetoric that would lead to that kind of conclusion.

But I also want to say that we have inherited a difficult situation to which we have tried to respond to the best of our ability, keeping in mind a couple of principles which to us are quite fundamental: first of all, the need for us to invest in people, the need for us to maintain our capacity to invest in the future of this province and to help, in cooperation with other governments in other jurisdictions and with all the help we can get from the private sector and from others, to succeed in investing in the future of this province.

That is the first objective that we have set out as a government, to try, in the face of a recession, in the face of an unparalleled economic change in the life of this province to be able to maintain a capital budget and a level of investment in this province which will keep employment up in the face of the tremendous recessionary forces that have been at work in our economy over the last two and a half years.

I'm proud to say, in cooperation with the Minister of Finance, our caucus and our government have over the last two and a half years produced budgets which have consistently emphasized the importance of jobs, of investment and of looking to the future, investing in the future, investing in training and investing in people.

That remains a fundamental objective, even of this program, even of this policy, even of what we are now putting in place. One has to keep one's eye on the target, that the target is not simply to cut the deficit for its own sake, the target is in order to create the space that will allow us to invest in jobs and invest in the future of this province, invest in people, invest in programs that will produce jobs for people. That's the first principle.

The second principle is equally clear, and it's a principle that I want to address very clearly. In listening to the comments that have been made by the Liberal Party and the comments that have been made by the Conservatives, I will not respond to them in any detail. But I want to speak particularly to those who are listening who come from a tradition, a tradition in which I place myself and for which I feel, as leader of our party, a very strong and personal attachment, and that is the principle of solidarity. Faced with the enormous difficulty that we have—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

1740

Hon Mr Rae: When the Leader of the Opposition was speaking, I don't recall our members making it difficult for people to speak, but I will reflect upon it.

I will say this. Faced with a budgetary situation which this province has been facing not just for one or two years but for several years, faced with the prospect of even more significant deficits in the future and the impact this would have on our province, on our capacity to create jobs, on our capacity to save programs and on the future of our province, this government has had to take some very difficult and tough decisions. We have had to take some very difficult decisions, for which we take full responsibility and which we feel are the responsible and sensible thing for us to do, faced with the difficulties that we are.

The first thing we have done is to look at the programs in government and to say that they have to be stopped and that they have to be reduced.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Brampton South and the member for Essex-Kent, come to order.

Hon Mr Rae: The second thing is to say to our fellow citizens that we expect them to pay their share as well, and so it's not with any great joy—no government does it with any great joy—we have done it. We have set up tax increases in the province which are generating revenues as we speak, which are in fact reducing the level of the public debt and which are in fact going to pay for essential programs and going to deal with the needs of our fellow citizens.

The taxes that we raise are going to build new schools. Over \$200 million we're investing in new schools this year. They're going to build new child care spaces. They're going to build new roads. They're going to build new subway systems. They're going to produce better social programs. They're going to maintain a million people who are now in receipt of social assistance benefits in the province of Ontario, not a number in which any of us can share any great joy or pride but a reality that we face with this difficulty.

The third element in our task, in our responsibility and in our obligation to deal with the size of the public sector deficit and the public sector debt was in fact to initiate a set of discussions with our colleagues in the public sector, in the broader public sector, nearly a million people working in the broader public sector, and to say that we were going to have to ask them to make their contribution to the life of the province over and above the contributions they were already making. We were asking them to make a sacrifice, and we recognize we're asking them to do something.

I believe that spirit of being prepared to do something

is still alive and well in the province. We tried for over two and half months at a set of negotiating tables to get people to negotiate what would be a framework agreement that would produce a positive result. We tried that. They walked away, to my regret. To my personal regret, they tore it up and walked away and said, "No, we want nothing to do with this process."

We were then left with a choice. We could either do, as has been suggested by the Leader of the Opposition—though not in these blunt terms because there's no nice way to do this, though she tried to sugar-coat it in her description of it. You can simply cut off the money and say to people: "Go sort yourselves out. You deal with the problem and we'll see you later." I don't think that would be responsible. I don't think that would be the sensible thing to do.

The second option we could take up would have been to simply walk away. Another option would have been to do bang, bang, bang, to simply cut and slash right across the board. We denied and we didn't do that.

What we have done instead is Bill 48, which still allows and encourages people to bargain, in which we still say to people: "We are prepared to bargain. We want to see you at the table." We are prepared to reduce the expenditure levels if there's a willingness to bargain, to buy in. Job security is on the table. Job training is on the table. Redeployment is on the table. Openness is on the table. Financial accountability is on the table. A better deal for public servants is on the table. We're asking them to make some sacrifices—we understand that—but we're offering something in return.

That's the bill the Tory party was prepared to support for a brief period of time. They now have gone back to the traditional position of opposition and said no. The Liberals have said no. We admit it's difficult. We're not doing this with any great sense of joy, but we do it with a sense of commitment. We're doing it because it's the fairest way to proceed, because it's the best way for us to express our solidarity with one another and because it's the way in which we're most likely to produce the strongest possible results for the people of the province.

This question of fairness has got to be uppermost in our minds. We cannot ignore the interests of those making less than \$30,000 a year, and we have not. We cannot ignore the interests of the public in receiving services, and we have not. We have had to address those issues. It's all very well for the opposition to say, "Just cut off the money and let people sort themselves out." It's not as easy as that.

Let me say this: When the Liberal Party was in government, they knew that as well. When the Tory party was in government, they knew that as well. Here we are. We continue to offer a social contract to the

people of Ontario, and that's the way in which we are going to proceed.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I ask the House to come to order. By order of this House, third reading debate on Bill 48 terminates at 5:45. There will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1746 to 1751.

The Speaker: I ask all members to please take their seats.

Mr Laughren has moved third reading of Bill 48.

All those in favour of Mr Laughren's motion will please rise, one by one.

Ayes

Abel, Allen, Bisson, Boyd, Buchanan, Carter, Charlton, Christopherson, Churley, Cooke, Cooper, Coppen, Dadamo, Duignan, Farnan, Fletcher, Frankford, Gigantes, Grier, Haeck, Hampton, Hansen, Harrington, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Jamison, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Lankin, Laughren, Lessard, Mackenzie, MacKinnon, Malkowski, Mammoliti, Marchese, Martel;

Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Pouliot, Rae, Rizzo, Silipo, Sutherland, Swarbrick, Ward, Wark-Martyn, Waters, Wessinger, White, Wildman, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winninger, Wiseman, Wood, Ziemba.

The Speaker: All those opposed to Mr Laughren's motion will please rise, one by one.

Nays

Arnott, Beer, Bradley, Brown, Callahan, Caplan, Carr, Chiarelli, Cleary, Conway, Cordiano, Cousens, Cunningham, Curling, Daigeler, Drainville, Eddy, Elston, Eves, Fawcett, Grandmaitre, Harnick, Haslam, Harris, Henderson, Jackson, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Kormos, Kwinter, Mahoney, Marland;

McClelland, McGuinty, McLean, McLeod, Miclash, Morin, Morrow, Murdoch (Grey), Murphy, O'Neil (Quinte), O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau), Offer, Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt), Poirier, Poole, Ramsay, Runciman, Ruprecht, Sorbara, Sterling, Stockwell, Sullivan, Tilson, Turnbull, Villeneuve, Wilson (Simcoe West), Witmer.

The Speaker: The ayes being 66 and the nays 59, I declare the motion carried.

Resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

It being almost 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 10 of the clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1757.

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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 8 July 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 8 juillet 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier
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Thursday 8 July 1993

The House met at 1001.

Prayers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS

EN CE QUI CONCERNE

L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

Mr Lessard moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 58, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative et la Loi sur les allocations de retraite des députés à l'Assemblée législative.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the honourable member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Wayne Lessard (Windsor-Walkerville): Over the last few years, constituents in my riding of Windsor-Walkerville have suffered tremendously from the impact of the recession. Plants have closed and the plants that remain open have reduced their workforces. Jobs have left the city as a result of federal economic policies like free trade, and those jobs are not returning. Private sector workers who still remain working have seen little or no wage increase over the past few years, and now public sector workers are facing the reality that government revenues that pay their wages have decreased for three years in a row.

Social Contract Act provisions, I know, are tough to take, but I believe people don't mind sharing the pain to maintain important public services like education and health care. But they want to know that the pain is being shared fairly by everyone, and they're not shy about letting their elected representatives know when they see things that they perceive to be unfair.

One of the things I've been hearing from my constituents lately is that they feel the MPPs' pension plan is unfair and needs to be reformed. They're not alone in expressing this opinion. The 1992 report of the Commission on Election Finances suggests as follows: "We feel that members should have the same entitlement for amounts paid into their pension plan as those in the public and private sectors. However, we do feel that the criteria for eligibility with respect to members' pensions should be reviewed."

Premier Bob Rae has agreed that MPPs' pension plans should be reviewed as well. I respect the judgement of the Premier, and on this issue I can only say that I think he's right on.

Mike Harris as well expressed his support when on

May 3 during question period he referred to the announcement of the Premier of the province of Alberta that he was going to be doing away with MPPs' pension plans and suggested to Premier Rae, "We should do away with any portion of our pension that is not fully funded."

Now, I know that there is a wide range of public opinion with respect to what compensation MPPs should be entitled to, from those who don't think that we should be paid at all to those who think we should be paid fairly in order to attract qualified candidates as representatives, but I think most people agree that we should be fairly compensated for a job that is difficult, time-consuming, challenging and oftentimes thankless. But when it comes to other benefits, like pensions, I think people get upset when they see something that is completely out of whack with what they see in the public and private sectors.

This bill would bring the MPP pension plan more in line with what's available in the public and private sectors, would help eliminate the unfunded liability and would also save taxpayers' money. Currently, a member who retires after at least five years of service is entitled to a lifetime pension. If the member's age and years of service on retirement add up to 55, then the pension is 5% of the member's pay for each year of service, up to a maximum of 75% of that pay. Periodically, adjustments in pension payments have been made to reflect increases in the cost of living, by the Board of Internal Economy.

People may not be so upset if they felt that the plan was self-sustaining and that any improvements in benefits were fully funded, as they are in almost every other plan. But they're not, and they haven't been for a long, long time. Even as far back as 1976, the actuarial report respecting pensions reported that allowances paid under the plan to cover increases in the cost of living, and these are benefits that are external to the plan and as a result are paid from the consolidated revenue fund, amounted to about \$68,000. In 1987, that amount had increased to \$887,000, and by last year had reached \$1.35 million. I think the trend is pretty clear, and that is that Ontario residents are paying an every-increasing amount towards the maintenance of the MPP pension plan.

If one agrees that the plan should be self-funding, then one of the places to look for that funding should be within the plan itself: surpluses. In fact, the plan did have a surplus, if you take out the cost-of-living adjustments, in 1991 of about \$669,000, but by 1992 that surplus had dwindled by half and has probably disappeared by now.

I think this is one of those issues where the public is

way ahead of the politicians, and although pension reform may not have been one of the deciding issues in the recent Alberta election, I think it would be foolish for us to ignore the results of that election. I don't want to see what happened in Alberta happen here. I don't want to see a wholesale devaluation of the work we do as MPPs, and I don't want to see a case where only the rich and those who may have other full-time employment are able to become politicians. So I think we need to seriously consider reforming the members' pension plan, and this bill proposes three changes.

First, the bill proposes to eliminate severance pay for members who resign voluntarily between elections, unless that resignation is for serious medical reasons. I think most voters find it incomprehensible that a member can resign midterm, leave them without representation for up to six months, start working at another well-paid job and also collect severance pay. Canadian workers have seen recent Tory amendments to the unemployment insurance plan deny them compensation if they quit without good reason. They must find this completely unfair.

In recent months, I've heard plenty about this issue as a result of the resignation of the member for Essex South, who quit to begin working for an amusement park located in the Detroit River. Although his employment was not interrupted one day, he was entitled to collect severance pay in an amount of over \$40,000. There is no such golden parachute for members of the general public.

Voters are similarly upset when members resign to take on other employment with a government agency, board or commission, receive severance pay, begin collecting their pension and also begin collecting a government salary at the same time, something referred to as double-dipping.

The second part of this bill suspends payment of pensions to members who continue their employment by virtue of a government appointment. There should be no reward for MPPs who quit voluntarily to move on to other jobs. If that job happens to be a government appointment, then retired MPPs should not be collecting a government pension and a government salary at the same time.

1010

Finally, the bill amends the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act so that members who retire will not be able to begin collecting their pensions until they reach the age of 55 or their age plus years of service equals 70, whichever comes first. If a member dies before then and leaves a surviving spouse, then the spouse wouldn't be entitled to collect a pension until the member, had he or she lived, would have reached the age of 55. However, if such a member leaves a surviving child or children but no spouse, the child or children would still be entitled to an immediate survivor benefit.

The rules with respect to qualifying for a pension and the level of benefits available would remain unchanged.

I know that given more time, there could have been further refinements made to this bill, but I think that it is important to begin the path of reform now and introduce it now instead of some time in the fall session.

I have to admit that when I began dealing with this issue, it became much more complicated than I had anticipated and there may be some unusual circumstances that I failed to pick up, and I'm interested in hearing suggestions about those.

I would also have liked to have had an opportunity to do an actuarial analysis of what impact these suggestions may have on the plan. I know there are other areas that need to be dealt with: the issue of people who are now collecting pension benefits, grandparenting provisions, and also the issue of fairness of the entitlement of surviving spouses in the event that they may have young children.

I want to acknowledge the previous work of the member Al McLean, who had introduced a bill prohibiting double-dipping on three occasions but never had an opportunity to debate it. I also want to acknowledge the work Peter Kormos did, who, unbeknownst to myself, introduced a bill that had some similar provisions in it to mine. I know that was helpful to legislative counsel, and I want to thank them as well, John Hill and Krystal Nikolich, who were able to accomplish a great deal in a short time.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I welcome the opportunity that the presentation of this bill provides to be able to address what is certainly a timely issue, timely in the sense that it is a matter of very genuine public concern and one which the members of this House should in fact be addressing.

I speak today not so much in support of the specifics of the particular bill which has been put forward, but indeed in support of the intent to review and to make changes to the MPPs' current pension plan. It's very clear, as I believe all members of this assembly have heard, that there are issues in the current pension plan which are of concern and which must be addressed.

There is a concern that MPPs become eligible for their pension after serving for five years, which in some cases, as we are all well aware, may be less than serving two full terms. That is a concern that must be addressed.

There is a concern that MPPs can draw their pensions immediately on retirement if their combined years of age and service equal 55. Again, clearly, this is very different from other pension plans and this is a concern which has to be addressed in any proposals for change that are made and subsequently passed by this assembly.

We recognize as well that there is a very real concern

that individuals can be eligible both to draw their pension and to receive remuneration for other public service at the same time. We recognize that this is a very difficult issue to resolve, as some past attempts to deal with what has been called double-dipping have proven. But needless to say, it is also a very real concern and it's a concern which needs to be addressed.

We in our caucus understand these concerns and we believe that there must be changes to the present plan. We are ready to cooperate to put changes in place.

Having said that, let me also say that I am a little bit surprised at this specific bill coming forward at this time for two reasons. One is because, as I think members of the assembly are aware, there is already a bill relating to MPPs' pensions which has been put forward by one of the colleagues of the member putting forward the bill today, so we have a bill presented by the member for Windsor-Walkerville and a bill that has been presented by the member for Welland-Thorold. I might have thought that two members of the same caucus would have been able to get together and present bills which were at least not contradictory in scope. It makes me wonder how serious the effort is to look at the very real concerns in MPPs' pension plans and to bring forward some joint recommendations for changes to those plans.

The second reason I'm surprised to see a bill being brought forward by a member of the NDP caucus today is that when this issue was raised just a short time ago, there was an agreement that was reached, at the initiative of the Premier, and it was agreed to by myself and by the leader of the third party, that indeed there would be a cooperative joint all-party effort made to review MPPs' pension plans, and that the review that would be carried out by an all-party committee would be informed by an independent actuarial review which the Premier undertook to implement and to complete, and that this review would assess the cost of the pension plan, levels of contributions and, as I understand it, would do an assessment of MPPs' pension plans in relation to other pension plans.

I believe it's very important that this review take place and, again, that there be an all-party, cooperative effort made to deal with what are real concerns so there can be a joint agreement on what changes need to be made and that those changes can be passed.

It doesn't seem to me that it does real justice to the issue that this should be coming forward in what seems to be a series of private member bills presented by members of the NDP caucus. Quite frankly, I would have thought that the Premier's own caucus members would have joined with my caucus in welcoming the independent assessment that the Premier himself has undertaken to put in place, and would have wanted to participate in that kind of joint effort to bring in changes to the current plan.

Nevertheless, we in our caucus are firmly in support of the intent to change the current plan. We will support this bill and we will in fact support the bill to be presented by the member for Welland-Thorold on the same issue, as we will support a bill which will stand in the name of one of our own caucus members, the member for Halton Centre.

Our goal is to see that all of these proposals come before the joint committee, which we trust will still be established, and that the work of that committee will still be informed by the independent review which is to be carried out, so that together we can address the very real concerns that exist so we can propose and recommend to this House, jointly, changes that should be made and that indeed those changes will be passed by this assembly.

I believe the goal of all of us here should be and is to ensure that those who are elected to serve in public office are neither financially advantaged nor seriously disadvantaged by their willingness to serve.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I'm pleased to have this opportunity to comment briefly on this bill this morning brought forward by the member for Windsor-Walkerville, Bill 58, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act.

I'm rather hesitant to comment extensively on this bill because I just received a copy this morning and I haven't had a chance to review it; however, I do want to say that when the member introduced his bill on July 5, I thought it was very appropriate.

He indicated at that time that the bill would eliminate severance allowances for members who resign unless there are serious medical reasons.

It would provide that members would not be entitled to be paid their pensions until they reach the age of 55 or the day on which their age and years of service total 70, whichever comes first.

It also provides that if a member dies before reaching the age of 55 or becoming eligible under the 70 rule and leaves a surviving spouse, the spouse would not be entitled to be paid the retirement allowance until the day on which member would have reached the age of 55 had he or she lived, but if the member has left a surviving child or children but no spouse, the children would still be entitled to an immediate survivor benefit.

It also suspends pensions while a person is receiving compensation for acting as a member or officer of any government agency, commission, board, committee, office or organization to do with government.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise and support this bill in principle because it attempts to do something that I tried to do myself when I introduced private member's Bill 73, An Act to amend the Public Service Superannuation Act, and Bill 74, An Act to

amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act. That was in May 1987.

My bills would have eliminated retirement allowances for persons entitled to them if that person is employed and/or receiving other compensation from the public service or other government agencies.

I wanted to end the practice, commonly known as double-dipping, whereby people who receive retirement pensions from the government are also being paid as a member of another government agency, commission, committee or board.

One of my bills dealt with elected officials while the other focused on civil servants. What about the civil servants who are getting the golden handshake, retiring early, wanting back in with the connections they have in the public service, getting contract positions?

1020

I believe it is morally wrong for people retiring on generous pensions to use the inside track to appointments. I also believe there are plenty of capable people in Ontario with little or no pension who could qualify for these appointments. While I support Bill 58 in principle, I would appreciate having the opportunity and the time to study this legislation, find out what loopholes there are in it, if any. I would hope that this bill reflects the ideals I tried to promote with my private member's bill back in the late 1980s, and a return to fiscal responsibility and personal integrity in the ranks of elected officials and the senior civil service.

I believed then, and I still believe now, that it is fiscally and morally irresponsible to make an appointment to a government agency, commission, board or committee, office or organization, without open competition and while government pensions are still being received.

The independent committee that has been recommended to be set up: I don't believe the election commission should be making recommendations; I believe it should be an independent committee set up by the Premier to look into the whole aspect of pensions. I also believe, as I've said on many occasions, no elected member should receive a pension until they're 55. I believe that is the appropriate, proper time that would be allowable. There's no way that somebody 41 or 45, with a lot of years of service, should be able to draw a pension and go and get another job in government. It just morally to me is not right.

What this bill is trying to do is to correct that situation. I would have hoped that the member and the member for Welland-Thorold could have got together and brought in one bill that we all could support to try and fulfil the commitments he's recommending here, although I like the proposals that this member is making better than the one from Welland-Thorold, because I believe the 55 age factor is the appropriate one.

That's why a lot of people get upset with politicians, when you read in the papers some of the other generous pensions in Canada that have been put in place. This here has been fair to the extent that you had to have the number of years of service and your age to match 55. I think that has been fair to the extent it has been because there's not been a lot of people, but if any are getting it and getting another job, that's not appropriate or right. So I will agree with this 55; I think it's proper. I would like to see that nobody can get that until they are 55.

The independent committee should make those recommendations and they should make them very strongly and change the whole process of pensions in Canada and Ontario, because I believe strongly that Bill 58, while, as I said, I haven't had an opportunity to go through the whole bill, is a step in the right direction. It's a step I would like to see and it's a step I think the people of this province want to see, because with what's gone on in Ottawa with the senators and with regard to the legislatures in other provinces, people are fed up.

Look, it's only right. Pensions were made for when you retire and had no other income. That is not what it has become. I want you to look at the senior civil servants who are retiring with large pensions. What are they doing? Are they getting back into the civil service and getting jobs, when other people could get them? I hope you will address this in your bill.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for South Hastings.

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): Thank you, Mr Speaker; Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings. I rise today in support of Bill 58, the Legislative Assembly Statute Law Amendment Act, 1993, that was presented today for second reading in the House by the member for Windsor-Walkerville.

I want to go back to 1987, because it was then that I first ventured down the political trail and vied for a position here in the Legislative Assembly. At that time, all my opponents were asked by a scrutinizing public if they thought the pension plan was too generous. Indeed, questions were even asked of them about whether they thought MPPs were paid too much. In 1990, I very seriously considered—not too prudently, I might add—that maybe I'd make a public statement and suggest that I not accept a pension if I were to be successful the second time around. This was in 1990, before I even knew I would be successful the first time. Let me just say that I didn't, and I want to say I'm glad I didn't, because the optics and the public perception about the job and the role of the members is somewhat different from what the real job and role the member plays here is.

Before I became a member, I thought maybe members made too much money, maybe their benefits were too good and maybe they shouldn't have pensions. Now

that I am an elected representative, I know, through the course of a day's work, how much work a member does, and now that I've had a chance to walk a mile in the shoes of a member, I have a different opinion. My opinion is somewhat different from what it was as one who was vying for the position and had never had first-hand experience.

Now that I've been here, I think that indeed people who have spent a considerable amount of time here deserve some sort of pension. There's no doubt in my mind. I also think there's not a lot of job security in this job. In fact, every five years or so, we go to the polls and our constituents determine whether they think we should have a longer life in this job or a shorter one. Because we have no job security, because we have no unemployment insurance—we don't pay into the unemployment insurance plan—I think there needs to be some compensation for members, who have given as much as they have for the time they've been here. Of course, the compensation will vary based on the amount of time one has been here. A member who hasn't reached that level of five years, of course, is not eligible for any pension. And the notion that if someone should resign their seat, they not get severance pay, I think is very admirable, and I think it's the sort of thing we would all support.

The public today is very, very sceptical about governments and politicians, and maybe rightly so, because as we look at the history of politicians—not to pick on any particular party or any particular member who may have retired—and look at what they get paid in the pensions they may be receiving now or what they can expect to be paid in the future, it does not sit well with the public generally.

I even thought that maybe in 1995 I might say, "Hey, I'm not going to take a pension." I don't know if there would be an advantage from my constituents in terms of whether I would be re-elected or not if I were to stand up and publicly say, "I'm not going to take a pension, because I don't think that's something that I, after just five, six or seven years, deserve." But I want to say that for those members who have been here for a number of years, I think a pension is something they deserve.

The big question that is raised is the double-dipping factor. It's been mentioned by everyone who has spoken previously. I think it isn't good, and the public doesn't think it's good; in fact, from time to time we see in the media that the public is outraged by the fact that members who have received very generous pensions have an opportunity to sit on boards and commissions and other appointments from the government and indeed, in some instances, double their salary. During these very difficult times of restraint, when the government of Ontario is asking all people to make contributions to help reduce the deficit, this is a time when we can see Bill 58 as something that is very advantageous.

I want to thank the member for Windsor-Walkerville for introducing this bill. I support it and I hope all the other members of this Legislature do, because I think it's not only what the members in this Legislature want, it's what the people of Ontario want as well.

1030

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I rise to support Bill 58 because I think the time has come for honourable members on all sides in this Parliament and in the Canadian Parliament to address two of the most irksome aspects of parliamentary perks, and those are certain aspects of the pension plans here in this Legislature and elsewhere in Canada, and certainly in the national Parliament, and the question of double-dipping.

I have over the course of 18 years in this Legislature addressed this issue both publicly and privately on my own behalf on a number of occasions. I have through most of those years not received very much support. In fact I bear a few lacerations from members, most of the lacerations coming from my friends in the New Democratic Party. So I cannot tell you how pleased I am to have honourable members in the New Democratic Party advancing bills as we have today in the name of the member for Windsor-Walkerville or in the name of the member for Welland-Thorold.

Let me say as well that I understand, perhaps as well as anyone in this place, the uncertainty, the difficulty, the unpredictability of political life. I grew up in a very political family. My grandfather served here for 16 years back in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. A cousin-in-law of mine, Mr Yakabuski, served here for 24 years. It's interesting when I think of the Renfrew county experience—and I think this has to be said—my two predecessors, Mr Yakabuski in south Renfrew and Mr Hamilton in north Renfrew, served, in the case of Mr Yakabuski, 24 years. He died the day he retired and received no benefit from his very generous pension entitlement. Mr Hamilton served here from 1958 to 1975, 17 years. He died six months after he retired. There are two examples of members who together served for over 40 years and who personally drew almost nothing of their pension entitlement.

I look at my county and I think of the late Joe Greene, who served with distinction in the Parliament of Canada, and Mr James Maloney, who served here with distinction. They died in office. When I look at the Renfrew county experience, most of the politicians I grew up with died in office or died very shortly thereafter. For them, the pension entitlement was a matter of a widow's benefit.

The average length of stay in the Parliament of Canada is now something in the neighbourhood of five to seven years. The average length of stay in this Parliament is now below five years. So the average member of the Ontario Legislature today will not even participate in this plan.

I was saying to my friend the member for Halton Centre, Mrs Sullivan, that we have had three successive electoral decapitations: 1985, 1987 and 1990. The greatest electoral change and decapitation in the 20th century in Ontario will occur in the spring of 1995. There will be a massive change and turnover in this place in two years' time. I say to my friends, if ever there was a time to change the plan, it is now.

I agree with the Leader of the Opposition who said a few moments ago on behalf of her Liberal colleague that there must be a new plan for a new Parliament. That is the 36th Parliament, which will presumably be elected some time in the spring of 1995. That new plan must deal with, I believe, those elements of the current arrangement that, as the member from Walkerville has pointed out, are unacceptable to the Ontario electorate and, I believe, to the Canadian electorate in this day and age.

The first of these problems is the problem of relatively young people like the honourable member now standing from north Renfrew; like the former Minister of Health, Mr Timbrell, from Don Mills; like my former colleague Mr Mancini; like Stephen Henry Lewis, who left here in 1978 at the age of 40 as a very young man with a very comfortable pension benefit. People talk about Mancini; I guess I would say, "Go and interview Stephen Lewis and ask him what it's been like for the last 15 years drawing a Mancini-like pension, or ask Timbrell." We've all got those kinds of examples of young people; I might add, relatively few examples.

We must address the fact that the people of north Renfrew or elsewhere in Ontario or in Canada cannot understand and should not accept the notion that, for whatever internal and private reason, certain young people after 10 or 15 years, at age 40, walk out of the Parliament of Ontario, the Parliament of Canada, the Parliament of Alberta, and have a pension payable at that age of 40, or 38 or 42, immediately and for life and indexed. That is the single, biggest irritation and wrong in the current arrangement that must be addressed.

I say to my friends on all sides, because, yes, the Liberals have Mancini, the Tories have Timbrell, the New Democrats have Stephen Lewis and Richard Johnston and Michael Breagh, who's drawing a pension of \$35,000 provincially, I think it is. He's up in Ottawa at age 40, and he's a wonderful fellow and I like Mike and he's a very good member of the Canadian Parliament. That's not the issue.

The issue is that my pension entitlement apparently—if I quit today and walked out of this place, I am entitled immediately to a pension benefit of \$54,000 annually. Let me say that there isn't a person I represent in the county of Renfrew who thinks that's fair and just. And you know what? They're right. If I quit tomorrow, I would feel honour-bound to tell the Speaker of this

assembly to defer that benefit until I was at least age 55, because I couldn't go home. I could not go home and face my parents or my neighbours or my electors who are good, hardworking people and who are not unreasonable, who understand the vicissitudes of politics and public life, because they remember Mr Yakabuski and Mr Hamilton and Mr Maloney and Mr Greene. They knew that none of those people made any money in the business of politics; in fact I could argue that Paul Yakabuski, who was married to my cousin, lost a fortune by being in politics, that he would have been a much richer man had he stayed in Barry's Bay and run the family business.

But I say again that there are two problems that must be dealt with, and the Conway problem, the Mancini problem, the Stephen Lewis problem, the Dennis Timbrell problem, which is young people who've been here for 10 or 15 years and who are, at age 40, able to walk out with an immediate entitlement is just indefensible and unacceptable. I say, as all honourable members besieged now with a scepticism and a cynicism about our honourable profession, let us together fix that problem.

The second issue that has to be dealt with, it seems to me, is the problem of double-dipping, and it is more complicated than we might imagine. Again, I think there is a way we can do it, and that is that honourable people who have a pension entitlement—and, again, if you put the 55 rule in, you deal with the problem to a very substantial extent. I don't mean to be partisan, but two people I know and like and respect—I can add a third one, my friend Bob Nixon. I was not happy when Nixon went to London and took his pension and took whatever salary attaches to the agent generalship in London. He has resigned that position essentially because the position has, on his recommendation, been terminated.

But, you know, we have Ian Deans and Elie Martel. Ian Deans was a very fine and outstanding member of this Legislature. He was a member of the Legislature for the New Democratic Party from 1967 till his retirement in 1979. He was a very able, effective House leader. He then became the MP for Hamilton-Wentworth and the federal NDP House leader. He now apparently claims a provincial pension, a federal parliamentary pension, and he draws a salary of something like \$140,000 on top of those two pension entitlements as chairman of the Public Service Staff Relations Board.

My friend Elie Martel, who worked long and hard as an outstanding member of this Legislature, is today, I'm sure, drawing a teacher's pension, a parliamentary pension from this place in the neighbourhood of \$33,000 or \$34,000, and he's drawing something in the neighbourhood of \$95,000 as an able member of the Environmental Assessment Board. That is wrong.

I'm not saying it's wrong that Mr Martel should serve

on the Environmental Assessment Board or that Mr Deans should not serve as chairman of the Public Service Staff Relations Board, but who among us can go out and say that one should have those three entitlements all coming from the public purse at this time?

This is a tough life, it is an uncertain life, and it is an honourable profession, but we have a couple of problems in this area of parliamentary perks. Let us together fix the problem.

1040

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): It's with some trepidation that I speak on this because of the penchant of the media to turn the issue into the ridiculous examples that have been used in the past. Fine examples were recognized by the member for Renfrew North just in his examples.

I think that the member brings forward a bill, which he's entitled to in private members' hour. I think that the member of the opposition, the member of the Liberal Party, was concerned to some degree with the motives behind bringing forward this bill in that we are entering into a by-election in the very near future in Essex South, which includes Mr Mancini, who has retired with a very generous pension.

Whenever we talk in this place about pensions, we don't expect to get any kind of crocodile tears from the public, because the public at this time are looking upon our profession with a great deal of scepticism, and therefore it's difficult to talk about this and come to a reasonable and rational conclusion with regard to what a member is entitled to or not entitled to.

I think that the member for Walkerville has brought forward in Bill 58 some reasonable suggestions in dealing with some of the problems which Mr Conway has identified. Mr Conway identified, number one, the problem of very young members, and I think that this bill does in some ways deal with that.

I would like to add to his list of problems that we have to deal with a third one, and that is: I think people out there have the impression that the normal MPP is getting paid \$60,000 in annual salary, or approximately that amount; I think it's \$44,000 plus \$15,000 of tax-free allowance.

One of the problems we have in dealing with pensions is that, because we separate those two amounts into two pots, pensions are based on the lower amount of \$44,000, or approximately that amount of money. Therefore, when we talk in terms of percentages and we talk in terms of entitlement, we're talking about a figure which is not realistic, and therefore it is difficult for the public to conceptualize around that.

Now, the other problem that we have had, and was exhibited by Mr Mancini, is that our pension has been based on the best three years of our parliamentary career. Mr Mancini was fortunate enough to be a full

member of cabinet very near the end of his political career. Therefore, Mr Mancini's pension was based not on \$44,000, but on \$44,000 plus \$33,000, which he was paid as a cabinet minister.

I don't think that is what our pensions should be based upon. I think they should be based perhaps upon the average salary that we have received over a longer period of time. Maybe that's a solution, or maybe the cabinet minister's salary should be not included in the pension entitlement. Now, when I say that, I say that in a way that would affect my own, because my best three years are still the years from 1982-85, when I was a cabinet minister in Mr Davis's government. Therefore, I probably, under the present rules, will never get to the point where I will ever improve those unless I stay after the next election and become the next Treasurer of the province of Ontario.

But notwithstanding that—

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): A little presumptuous, are we? Don's the finance critic. He'll be upset about that.

Mr Sterling: I think one of the problems that Mr Lessard and anyone dealing with this particular problem has is that until we get our remuneration that we are receiving into the proper form—and that is that we should all be paid \$70,000 a year total and pay taxes on it like everybody else in Ontario does on the total amount of \$70,000. That's about what it works out to when you work out \$44,000 plus \$14,000 in tax-free allowance. The end would be \$70,000.

It's too bad we didn't do that during the latter part of the 1980s when there wasn't a recession, because it's hard for the people to understand when you jump a salary from a total package of \$58,000 or \$60,000 to \$70,000. It's difficult, and the people would say, "Well, they're taking a \$10,000 increase." There would be a great hue and cry, and the media would perhaps not be as careful as they might be in reporting why it went from \$60,000 to \$70,000, but I believe that it would be a more honest way of paying members of this Legislature.

That's what should be the determination of the amount of pension. The pension should be based on that amount, and anything more that you got, as a parliamentary assistant or a committee chairman or a cabinet minister, I don't believe should be added to your pension.

One of the things the public perhaps doesn't understand is that if we take a member like Floyd Laughren, who is the dean of the House at this point in time, who has spent 22 years in this place—he's 58 years of age, I believe, at this time. He came to the Legislature perhaps in his prime earning years. If Floyd Laughren had not been a member of cabinet, his pension after leaving this place—he ran in the last election perhaps

not on the expectation of being in the cabinet; I'm sure it wasn't on the expectation of being in the cabinet—if Floyd Laughren would have retired at the end of this term, after 25 years of service in here, Floyd Laughren would have been entitled to a pension of about \$32,000 or \$33,000 a year.

I don't think that's adequate for the amount of work, the skill that Floyd Laughren has and the effort he has put into his job when we compare it to other public servants in this province. Now it is difficult for a person who is not getting any pension to understand me saying that \$32,000 or \$33,000 wouldn't be adequate for Floyd Laughren, who had served here for 25 years, but when I look at teachers' pensions and other public servants, they would far exceed what Mr Laughren would have received under the scenario that I paint.

There are some problems with the severance provisions of the bill. They would encourage people to hang on, to be MPPs even though they weren't doing the job. They would retain their seats until another election was called, notwithstanding they weren't doing their job.

We would have to go through these details, and I'm sure, deal with some of them, but otherwise we are supporting this bill.

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I'm privileged to rise and join in the debate on Bill 58, introduced by my friend and colleague from Windsor-Walkerville.

Some members of my caucus said to me, "You know, you're the last one who should be getting up here this morning to speak about this," but nevertheless the pensions that I am in receipt of were all earned honestly and sometimes for the good of this country, and I must say that none of them were received early. It's put me in the position, with the clawback from income tax, to rather make me almost a volunteer here, so I can speak with some objectivity, free of bias.

I know that once we get into a recession, as we are in now, the first recipients of the public's outrage are members of Parliament and members of the provincial government. I find that a little bit sad in some respects, because like many of my colleagues here, when I came to Queen's Park for the first time, I had that perception that MPPs were down here living the good life and what a swell time it was. I quickly came to realize that it's not the swell life that the public perceives.

I'd like to mention two members here, the member for Kenora and the member for Rainy River. I think it's quite significant that both of those gentlemen are single, and I just think of the tremendous effort it must be for those two people to represent their riding, one almost close to Winnipeg and the other one almost a world away from here. I think when you recognize that commitment, when you realize what that does to people here, I have some difficulty in criticizing members' pay, pensions and whatever.

1050

Nevertheless, there is a public perception that we have to address that the pensions are not right, and I agree they're not right. The pensions that I received were at the normal age of 55 and later at 60 and just recently at 65, and I think people can live with that and accept that, but the public's perception—obtaining a pension in the early 40s is unacceptable.

I would like to see some sort of process whereby when he left, a member would get a certain amount of money but the main thrust of the pension will kick in at 55, like very similarly it does in the military now. You leave the military at 50, but you get a small pension and then at 60 the pension kicks in with the indexing, which it did in my case, and I couldn't live without another job between 50 and 60. Likewise, I think that we have to respect members who retire early. They are entitled to something for their effort, because it's very difficult for members, unless you have a high profile, to get alternative employment when you leave here.

I think that in 1995, when there's another election called and perhaps some of our members will not be successful, they're going to face an awfully difficult time in finding employment, because the perception of employers, I think, is that, "We really don't want MPPs on staff." I think you have to think about that, and you have to think about that in regard to severance pay, in that it bridges the gap when you will be on your own and trying to just pay the bills. I don't agree with the severance pay being cut, but perhaps, who knows, when people resign, we are not privy to all the personal reasons behind that, and arbitrarily to say that you don't get any severance pay to me is a bit draconian.

I do have great difficulty with MPPs who leave here and go on to the House of Commons and become members there, but I believe that this difficulty is not necessarily their own, because I've spoken to Ross Stevenson, who is the federal member for Durham and I believe was the Minister of Agriculture, albeit for a very brief time, for the Conservative government. He made many attempts to try to transfer his pension from here to there because he didn't want to draw it, but apparently you can be in Ottawa and you can bring that pension to here, so when we lambaste people like Mike Breaugh for going from here to there, I believe for sure that he would much rather transfer that pension, which brings me to a point that I made when I came here.

I had that meeting where they sort out all your coverage and everything, and I said, "I'm in receipt of a pension from the public service, and I would much rather not take that and somehow have that incorporated in here so that when I leave here I would get a pension." They said, "No way, you can't do that." So here I was trying to get rid of a pension and I couldn't get rid of it. I think that before we lay considerable blame on members from here drawing another pension, we

should think that they probably tried or would have loved to have transferred that.

In so far as getting positions outside when you leave here and enjoying your pension, I think that's wrong. I don't think that one should leave here with a pension and get another job as an appointee to a public service for even more money. I think that's repugnant and I hope that's changed.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for this brief time to address this issue.

Mr Sutherland: I'm pleased to speak to the member for Windsor-Walkerville's bill. I think in principle it's a very good bill in terms of talking about the type of changes that need to be done.

Dealing with, obviously, our own salaries and compensation is a tricky issue, and as I think the member for Carleton said, part of the problem is it's very hard for the public to understand what the total compensation package is for members of Parliament, and we do need to deal with that issue.

Let me just say, though, that it is certainly nowhere in the range that appeared in a response in the Windsor Star a little while ago, a phone-in response, where someone said that before they cut anything else they should cut the some \$200,000 a year that MPPs make through all their perks. We know it's nowhere near that.

I want to state for the record that it's my opinion that 95% of all MPPs and elected officials are very hardworking, dedicated people who are doing the best job they feel they can do in terms of representing their constituents. That goes for all sides of the House, and I think that's important. I may disagree with their politics, but they are very hardworking, dedicated people, despite what is sometimes portrayed out there.

I think in terms of how we deal with this pension issue, when the House was elected, I was the youngest member. I hope to sit here for many years, as some of the other members have been fortunate enough to do.

I guess the background is that the pension plan was developed because of the lack of job security. Also, traditionally, this place has attracted professional people, and when you compare the salaries of MPPs to what most of the professionals make, we make far less than that. It was thought that the pension plan should be developed to help compensate for that loss of income that many of those professionals would be suffering, because you wanted to attract the so-called best and brightest, not to make them independently wealthy, but should they have to suffer a strong financial penalty? Also, because of the insecurity of this place, as the member for Renfrew talked about.

It is a professional job. It doesn't have the traditional professional qualifications. You don't get recognized by an association; you get recognized by the people. I think we are compensated adequately. I don't think we're as

overpaid as many people think we are.

The pension plan is a very irksome issue to many of the public and we do need to look at changing it. I think the recommendations put forward in the bill by the member for Windsor-Walkerville are a very good start. Saying that people would have to wait until at least age 55 or a combination equalling a 70 factor is far more reasonable and I think more consistent with what is out there.

Let me say that when we talk about this pension issue, again, I don't think it's an opportunity for an open field day on elected officials, because as I say, in my short experience here and dealing with many federal members as well, I believe most elected officials are very dedicated, hardworking people who are doing the best job possible to represent their constituents. We sometimes say some silly things that get reported and picked up, but with the number of hours and the type of events and things they do for the community, people should be proud of their elected officials overall.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Windsor-Walkerville, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr Lessard: I want to thank all the members who participated in this debate and expressed their support with the provisions of Bill 58. They participated in a very spirited debate in a very non-partisan manner. I think everyone appreciates that when it happens here from time to time.

I especially want to thank the member for Renfrew North for his remarks that were made in that spirit of non-partisanship. I think he is right, that things have changed in this place over the years and that the time has come to bring about some changes in some of the benefits that we receive as a result of our employment here as well.

I realize that there has been an independent committee that's been agreed to, to review the matter of MPPs' pensions, and the suggestions that have been put forward in the bill that I've introduced shouldn't be considered to derogate or take away from the efforts that are going to be conducted by that independent committee. I think it could be considered as a bit of a nudge to get work started on this review and also offer some suggestions that can be considered by the committee in doing its work. Also, I think it's important that we discuss these issues in a public forum rather than in closed meetings.

I want to thank all the members who offered suggestions as well for other things that could be considered, either as amendments to this bill or in the overall review of pensions, and other issues perhaps dealing with civil servants who retire and receive other work or MPPs who retire and receive other contract jobs, and also to address the total compensation package and how we use that to determine members' pensions.

Mr McLean: On a point of personal privilege, Mr Speaker: In my remarks, I talked about an independent committee looking at the aspects of this. What I wanted to say was an independent consulting firm, other than members of this Legislature. I want to make it abundantly clear that the tax-free allowance should be done away with and that there should be one salary, and that should be the basis of how members are paid.

The Deputy Speaker: It's not quite a question of privilege, but I think it's a correction of the statement. We accept it.

1100

ELECTION STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES ÉLECTIONS

Mr Sorbara moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 57, An Act to amend the Election Act and the Legislative Assembly Act / Loi modifiant la Loi électorale et la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): This is the first opportunity in eight years that I've had to present a matter, to actually have a matter debated and discussed, in private member's hour.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): No, that's not possible.

Mr Sorbara: Yes, I say to my friend from Renfrew North, it is possible; it's true.

I did a little bit of thinking of what I might want to bring forward for consideration by my colleagues in this Legislature. The bill that is before you is, I think, an important piece of reform. Although it doesn't change entirely our political system, it does present for members' consideration a reform to our parliamentary process that I think is important and timely and ought to be adopted by the members. This bill simply changes the way in which we fix the time for a by-election when a seat has been declared vacant either by the resignation of a member of this House or by the death of a member who is sitting in this chamber.

Why is it that we should be reforming this process? The answer to that is quite simple. For 126 years in Ontario, the procedure we have used is that the calling of a by-election has been at the will and the whim of the Premier of the day. The Premier is constrained somewhat by a statute which says that the by-election must be called some time over the course of six months, but often the date for that by-election is fixed for a period which is well beyond that six-month period.

The net effect of that system is that the people of the riding that is no longer represented in this Parliament

have to live without a representative, and frankly without a constituency office as well, sometimes for as long as 8 or 9 or 10 months and sometimes, when the process is really abused, as much as a year.

I just think it's time to end all of that. I think it's time to appreciate that in a parliamentary democracy such as ours, the right of representation, the right to be represented in the Parliament, is just about as fundamental and seminal as any of the rights that collectively make up our democratic system.

What this bill does is to take the power out of the hands of the Premier and place that power really back in the hands of the Legislature, but even to be more accurate, in the hands of the people of the riding where the by-election is to be held.

The bill is simple and straightforward. It says that when a seat becomes vacant, either by resignation or by death, the by-election shall be held on the Thursday after the 70th day after the effective date of the vacancy. Why 70 days? In a sense, it's kind of arbitrary. I chose 70 days simply because in Ontario, a writ period, that is, the period of an election, is generally 37 days. So within that 70-day period, at the tail-end of it, there will be a 37-day writ period. That's the election period. That's the period when the three or four or five candidates are out campaigning to try to win the by-election. The balance of that time, the period of 33 days before the writ is issued, I think that month is time enough for each party to be able to identify candidates and have nominated candidates.

My desire was to make that period as short as possible to ensure that as quickly as possible there is a new member of Parliament for the riding where the vacancy has occurred, so I'm suggesting 70 days. But I should tell my friends that if this bill passes this private members' hour and goes to a committee, I would be open and I think the government would be open and opposition parties would be open to consider whether it should be 75 or 80. The precise number is not of any particular importance. But the notion and the principle and the thrust of this bill are to ensure that as quickly as possible a by-election is called and a new member is elected to represent that riding.

It's not as if this is a rare occurrence. Indeed, there are a number of members sitting in this Parliament now who first came to sit in this Parliament as a result of a by-election. Indeed, some very eminent members of this Parliament, now retired, or defeated, in some cases—I think of Bob Nixon, who was one of the greatest parliamentarians who ever sat in this place. He came to sit here as the result of a by-election on the passage of his father. But my friend the member for St George-St David and my friend the member for Brant-Haldimand as well, in our own party, sit here in this House as a result of a by-election. Unfortunately, in each of those cases, they had to wait a very long time to find out

when the by-election would be called, as did the other candidates, and then of course go through the process of a by-election.

There are no losers in this, except perhaps the Premier of the day, whoever that is, who loses the power to make a politically strategic decision in calling a by-election. Political parties don't really lose, and there are winners. The winners are the people in the riding where the by-election is to be held, because as quickly as possible they have an opportunity to ensure that they're represented in this Parliament and to do so in an expeditious manner.

The question the government is going to have to ask when it considers whether or not it's going to support this bill is, does it want to take that power away from the Premier and substitute it with the statutory provision to allow an expeditious by-election? For my friends opposite on the government side who are thinking, "Maybe we ought not to deny our Premier or any future Premier the right to do that," might I just say to them that it's not such a big loss.

I think, for example, of the premiership of René Lévesque from 1976 to I think it was 1985, when he was defeated by the Liberals under Robert Bourassa. I think during the course of his tenure as the Premier of Quebec, there were some 15 or 16 by-elections. The Parti québécois and René Lévesque didn't win one of them, yet they were able to secure the support of the voters to be re-elected I think twice before defeat in 1985. So the loss of this power by the Premier is not such a great loss, but the gains in parliamentary reform I think are of some significance.

I remember during the course of the Liberal leadership campaign that each of the six of us who were candidates in that campaign talked a great deal about reforming the democratic process and reforming the parliamentary system. I, for one, am very much in favour of a bill that will completely change the electoral system so that the divine right of premiers to call general elections when they think it most expedient be taken away, and that that be replaced by a statutory provision requiring elections to be held on a date certain, at a fixed time. A fixed electoral system is something whose time I think has come in Ontario. But that reform is I think for a longer debate and something that I would hope either this government or some future government will bring to the Parliament so we can clean up that process once and for all.

1110

When the historians look back at this period and, I confess, look back at the election that David Peterson called early in 1990, I think that is evidence enough that these decisions ought not to be left to the determination of one cabinet or one Premier. I think a good place to start in this reform is to start by changing the way in which we determine when a by-election shall happen.

I am sitting right now in the seat of the former member for Essex South. Remo Mancini represented that riding for almost 15 years. He retired two or three months ago and the people of Essex South are now without representation. They do not know when a by-election will be called. Those people who are considering being candidates, whether NDP or Liberal or Tory or independent, don't know when the election is to be called. There is no representation there. I just think we ought to eliminate that abuse and get these by-elections on as quickly as possible.

The other element of this bill that I'll just touch on for my final 30 seconds is that during that 70-day period this bill provides that the constituency office be maintained. I also think that's something that all members should support, because it serves the people of the riding and it allows individuals who need to get in touch with their government through the office of an MPP to do so and to do so without disruption notwithstanding that the seat has become vacant.

I am pleading with my friends on all sides of the House to support this bill and ensure that it gets passage and moves through the committee process.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I welcome this opportunity to comment briefly on private member's Bill 57, An Act to amend the Election Act and the Legislative Assembly Act, which was introduced by Mr Sorbara, the member for York Centre, and received first reading on June 29.

This legislation would fix a day for the holding of by-elections to fill vacancies in this Legislature to take place on the first Thursday 70 days after the date on which the vacancy occurred, a commonsense approach. As well, the Speaker would take the appropriate steps to permit the constituency office of the member whose seat has become vacant to remain open and serve the public until the vacancy has been filled.

While I support Bill 57 in principle, I do have questions about whether or not the people of Ontario would be expected to foot the bill for a costly by-election if the vacancy occurred shortly before a government's mandate was due to expire and it was going to go to the polls anyway.

I refer to the matter of unnecessary and expensive elections, because you may no doubt recall that in April 1991 I introduced a private member's bill aimed precisely at preventing unnecessary and expensive elections. The purpose of that bill was to establish the timing for general elections so that they could occur four or five years apart, or sooner than that only if the government had been defeated in the assembly. As well, my bill would have established a maximum 60-day period between the date of the writs of election and election day.

I introduced those bills more than two years ago,

because I wanted to see the prevention of unnecessary and expensive elections in Ontario if there is no logical or moral reason for one being called. School boards and municipalities have set dates, so why shouldn't we?

I find it somewhat ironic that the member for York Centre has brought this bill before us for consideration, because it was the actions of the former government and its former Premier that prompted me to introduce my private member's bill in 1991. Of course, I'm referring to the September 6, 1990, provincial election called by the then Premier, David Peterson, only three years into a Liberal five-year mandate with some 92 members in the government. There was no logical or moral reason for that election. It was a waste of taxpayers' money.

That election cost millions of dollars and was called only because David Peterson hoped it was an opportune time for what he thought would be another victory at the polls. We all know that David Peterson was wrong and we know that his mistake led to another mistake, and that was the election of the first socialist government in Ontario. That was the biggest mistake.

An editorial titled "Another Good One From Our Mr 'Bill'" was published in the April 13, 1991, edition of the *Orillia Packet and Times*. At that time they said:

"Excuse us, Mr McLean, but this kind of clear, commonsense thinking simply has no room in politics. Imagine making an elected government fulfil its mandate by governing for a full term. How novel.

"At Queen's Park this week...MPP Al McLean, the king of the private member's bill, came up with another good one: 'I want to see the prevention of unnecessary and expensive elections in Ontario if there is no logical or moral reason for one being called.'

"McLean came up with the idea after last year's disastrous decision by former Premier David Peterson to call an election three years into his majority government's five-year mandate. Of course, McLean hasn't lost any sleep over Peterson's stunning departure, but he is justifiably concerned that the entire exercise was a colossal waste of taxpayer money."

That is the opinion of the people and that is the opinion of the editor and publisher of the *Orillia Packet and Times*. It says:

"This kind of thinking from McLean is a true indication that his concerns are with the people and not the party line. If our MPP had his way, he would be stuck on the PC side of the Legislature, out of power for a full five-year period with no chance of a quick victory based on some Premier's selfish motives for a stronger mandate....We can only hope that some day McLean gets a chance, as a veteran member of the governing party, to see some of his people-first bills through" the Legislature.

I noted earlier in my remarks that I support Bill 57 in principle, but the member is back now and I would like

some of the matters clarified relating to the timing and expense of a by-election if it was called close to the end of a government's mandate. As well, I would like to know what safeguards would be in place to ensure that the operation of a constituency office would remain non-partisan in the riding where the vacancy occurred.

I agree with this member's bill. We have a lot of bills in here on Thursday mornings, plain, commonsense bills. This is the type of bill that should have three readings within hours to become law, and in effect the by-election in Essex South would be called. It's not the people here who are being hurt; it's the people in that riding who are not being represented.

We have had other bills. Plain common sense would tell you what should happen. This is one of those bills that the member for York Centre has brought in. I can't help but support it totally and would hope that the government members would see that this bill is passed as soon as possible.

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I am very pleased to rise this morning to speak in support of Bill 57, introduced by my friend and colleague the member for York Centre.

I'm particularly interested in section 4 of the bill, 27.1, where it says:

"When an election is to be held to fill a vacancy that has occurred in the membership of the assembly, the Speaker may take steps as are appropriate to permit the constituency office of the member whose seat has become vacant to remain open to serve the public until the seat has been filled."

I see this as the crux of your bill. It's to serve the public.

I have a uniqueness that I'd like to add to this debate, as far as my own experience in the 1990 election. As you know, Mr Speaker, or perhaps you don't, on October—I forget the date; it's a long time ago—anyway, on the night of the election, I was the winner by eight votes. Obviously such a slim margin as that—

Mr Sorbara: Those eight voters subsequently committed suicide.

Mr Mills: I'm trying to be friendly and support your bill.

We were sort of technically the winners, you see, but we weren't the winners, because there was a recount and then there was another recount, and all the time in between, as you know, Mr Speaker, there were no funds available and technically I wasn't the member.

But you could not tell that to the people of Durham East. I can remember that the very next morning, the phone rang off the hook. "You're our member and we want you to do so-and-so and so-and-so." I tried to explain to them that I wasn't the member, and they said, "Wasn't there an election yesterday?" and it went on and on and on.

1120

What I had to do was to install another telephone in my house—two telephones. I had to get answering machines in there and my wife, who is very unpolitical, was absolutely run ragged when I wasn't there to try and answer the phones and the questions.

So I can speak with a great deal of feeling about how people feel when they're not represented, because, although I was technically, in their eyes, the person who had been elected, I wasn't elected, but they thought I was. So I really think that this part of Bill 57 is a very great move. I only thought afterwards that if the constituency office had been available from the previous member, Mr Cureatz, how much easier my life would have been and how much better I would have been able to serve the people from Durham East.

It wasn't until November—I looked at the picture of when I was sworn in down here. I was the last one to be sworn in and I was wearing a poppy so it must have been in November some time—and here we had all that time that we tried to handle the constituents of Durham East under very, very difficult conditions.

Mr Jean Poirier (Prescott and Russell): Gord, that poppy was for "Lest we forget."

Mr Mills: Lest we forget. Anyway, I'd just like to add my comments in support of that bill. I think the uppermost thought in my mind is that people must have representation. They must have that representation as soon as possible, and this bill goes a long way to achieving that. With that reasoning, I will support it.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): I rise with pleasure to speak to this bill. This is one shot fired for restructuring this place and actually making it democratic and making it operate for the people as opposed to the members of this House.

We have little enough power as backbenchers, as members of the opposition, to affect anything in this place. As I've said on many occasions, it's all done by the Premier of the day, of whatever party, about four cabinet ministers and about six unelected spin doctors down on the second floor. The only thing that doesn't change is they don't move from the second floor as elections take place, but every party has done this.

I applaud my colleague for bringing this in and let me say why, and I have to say it very quickly, which for me is very difficult, as you know, Mr Speaker. I have at least three of my colleagues who wish to have a snippet of time to speak to this bill.

I suggest to you that this bill—I would join with the member for Simcoe East—should be given three readings today because it's a very important bill.

Mr Poirier: Bang, bang, bang.

Mr Callahan: Bang, bang, bang, yes, my colleague says. In fact what we're dealing with here almost follows on the footsteps of what the government says it

has to do in terms of cost-saving. If you think about it, and the public should know this, every constituency office lease has a clause in it that requires us to pay three months of rent when it's unoccupied. That, to me, is total nonsense.

In the meantime, the constituents, who are the people who are to be served by us, not we being served by them, have no place to call. I don't know about your people, but my office has got reams of paper, reams of requests, and the people who work with me in my offices are excellent people. They really look after the needs of Brampton South, and I'm sure that's the same of every member here.

Why should we waste the money? Why should we leave those offices empty? It doesn't make any sense at all. It may have been just a political decision that was made in the past by former governments that they didn't want to have anybody around, a semblance of that Liberal or that New Democrat or that Conservative, because they might infect the minds of those people in the interim. So what?

I, for one, find the basic value is to serve those people during that hiatus. I think my friend's thought about bringing in the by-election within a certain period of time is excellent. You don't leave it to the whim of the Premier to decide what date is going to be politically attractive to him at the expense of those people who we're supposed to be representing and we're paid handsomely for it. Why should it be in the Premier's aegis to do that?

He should be required by statute to call it. Everybody knows when it's going to be called. You can also have enumeration. In fact, I'd like to see this go further. No longer should we have enumeration and waste money on sending people around to collect names. There should be a permanent voters' list. You should be required by law to update it, just like your driver's licence.

There are many more things that can take place, but in my view, this is one blow struck for the people, as opposed to the politicians, and in fact it will provide them with that essential item that all of us are supposed to provide for them, which is service.

I'm going to support this wholeheartedly and I applaud my colleague from York Centre for having brought this forward. I hope that there will be more bills. We should have an omnibus bill before this Legislature. We should have all sorts of things. Even Queen's Park offices should remain open. Why should people be denied access to Queen's Park? For some of them, for some people, where their ridings are way off in northern Ontario, or people who want to get in touch directly with a minister or whatever through their member, they should have access through those people.

In addition and finally in closing, I would say, in the interests of saving money and making certain that the

money that we do spend is spent well to represent the people of our various ridings, our staff as well—I don't know whether you know this or not, but our staff are given a certain amount of severance pay as well. It may be three months or I guess it depends on the length of time they've served.

So what in fact you're doing is, you say to them, "Well, goodbye, the office is closed tomorrow," because the member has died or resigned. They had nothing to do with it; it wasn't their fault. It wasn't the people being represented; it wasn't their fault either. You say goodbye to them, you hand them a cheque and they go off and look for another job.

In the meantime, what you could do is to keep them on—and this doesn't say it in the bill for Queen's Park staff—but you keep them on and they continue to serve. If the next member who's elected decides that he wants to keep those people on—and I would say that I think anybody coming into my office at Queen's Park, or at my constituency office, would probably take on my staff, even if the election happened to go to the New Democratic Party or the Conservatives got the bid, because they're excellent people, and if we're all honest with one another, our staff really serve the public very well. Having said that, I'm going to support this bill wholeheartedly.

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I'm going to only use a few minutes of my eight and a quarter minutes left after the member for Simcoe East, the king of the private members' bills, because there are three other Liberals who want to speak on this who have been involved in provincial by-elections and I'd like to give them the opportunity to say a few remarks here. So if you would note any time that I have left and give it to the Liberal Party.

I'm in support of this kind of a bill in private members' hour. I think it's the right kind of matter for us to be determining. It's fairly simple, it's straightforward and it's not ripping apart the fabric of Ontario or dealing with a major policy decision in Ontario. I congratulate the member for York Centre in bringing forward something which I believe is the proper subject for discussion here.

I say that in deference to the member for St George-St David, who brought forward a private member's bill which I thought was quite improper to bring forward in this Legislature because it had far-reaching ramifications, dealt with a lot of financial matters in this province, had financial ramifications, and there wasn't an opportunity for many members to debate that in this Legislature. It was a very, very important subject for members to get on the record.

However, I think that we can deal with this bill in this amount of time today. I'd only say one or two remarks. I'd be interested in hearing the proposer of the bill indicate under whose direction the constituency

office staff would march. I think it's important for us to have at least in the debate an indication or some kind of direction, if in fact it's to be the Speaker, then it would be the Speaker who would direct the constituency officer whom they would ask questions to. You know yourself, Mr Speaker, that on a daily basis we get questions from our constituency staff as to how to handle problems etc and there has to be some kind of direction going to that constituency staff from someone.

I could say a lot about terms etc. I would have preferred in the bill—and I would prefer the member to put it in committee of the whole House so there could be a little bit of debate and perhaps some movement for amendment—some flexibility in the actual date, not a great deal of flexibility, but something like a two-week or a three-week span as to when that particular Thursday fell, particularly in the death of a member when it can't be determined actually what that Thursday is surrounding. Is it surrounding a holiday weekend? Is it surrounding kids going back to school or whatever? I like a little bit of flexibility, and I trust whoever is Premier of the day to exercise a flexibility of one or two weeks on each side of those 70 days to the best interests of the voters of Ontario, regardless of which party the Premier at that time represents.

1130

The only other thing, and I think the member for Simcoe East made a good point, is that perhaps there should be a different rule in the fourth and the fifth year of the mandate of a government and that there should be maybe more discretion given to the Premier of the day to postpone an election, or maybe it should be lengthened from 70 days to 140 days in the fourth and the fifth year of the mandate of the government.

It's a thought that I just throw out for consideration by other members of the Legislature, but I'm willing, basically, to live with the hard and fast rules that the member has put forward. I think that perhaps it could be improved on slightly, but I think we could do that in committee of the whole House. I don't believe any bill should have first, second and third reading on the same day. I believe there should be a pacing of the legislation. I believe the pacing of this legislation is that it should take place in about a week's time.

I'll give up the rest of my time to the Liberal caucus, about three and a half minutes.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Sterling has indicated that he wishes to give the remaining time, I believe three minutes, 44 seconds, to the official opposition. Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): I want to commend the member for York Centre for having brought forward this bill, because I think many of us in this House are aware that there are far-reaching discussions on parliamentary reform going on in this place, members bringing forward ideas on what they would

like to see happen. Definitely within some of the committees these ideas are beginning to be debated and so this is timely on his part to bring this forward for this type of discussion.

The bill has a lot to recommend it. As various members have already spoken and the fact that they will be voting in favour, I will indicate my own support at this time for this bill, because when we look at a bill like this we try to determine what the pros and cons are, not only for ourselves but for the public at large. For the most part, there's absolutely nothing wrong with this bill. There's a lot for and really very little against.

I did, however, want to raise some personal points of what I would have liked to see addressed by this bill. I had spoken to the member earlier, so he does realize that there are some issues around electoral reform that I would have liked to see take place, but in this particular bill they are not, and I understand his reasons why they are not in place at this time.

I think first and foremost, one for me is the issue of enumeration. I ran in 1987 as a candidate, and obviously in 1990, and in both those elections what I found to be major problems and hurdles that were very difficult to overcome were the many hundreds of people who in fact were left off the voters' lists. We are talking of blocks and blocks of people who for whatever reason had not been enumerated, and we did not find out about this in a quick enough fashion during that particular campaign to be able to get those people to go down and get themselves on to the voters' lists.

I know there have been some changes made in how we do enumeration in the province of Ontario, and while that has addressed some of those concerns, it's still not the best job it could be. This is really not the place today to bring forward all of those ideas that I think each and every one of us has about correcting some of the problems of running any election, be it a by-election or provincial or federal election. It really behooves us to address that issue at some point, because I think denying people the right to vote through not being on the voters' list is a major flaw.

There is another point I would like to raise. I am not a northern member but we have many northern members in our caucus and I know the member for York Centre has some northern members as well. I think really that he should have a discussion with his colleagues as to how citizens, constituents for the member for Kenora, get to the poll in the wintertime. This is a major concern. In some instances, maybe it's easier to get around than in the summer. Knowing the kind of land masses people have to deal with, trying to get through a bog is easier to do in the winter as opposed to in the summer. But still, the whole transportation issue and allowing people to get to the poll, and again the enumeration issue under those circumstances, are ones that really have to be addressed. We can't forget that climate and

geography do play a role in how elections are run, giving people the opportunity to exercise their democratic right.

Also, I wanted to raise the point that I have some friends who live in the United States and we obviously talk about how elections are run. They're usually thoroughly amazed that we manage to conduct an election campaign in 37 or 57 days, depending on the jurisdiction. They spend a year having their presidential elections, and for the House of Representatives and the Senate as well there is a fair amount of time and, shall we say, a lot of money.

When we're really talking about getting prepared for an election campaign and the whole issue around election finances and really trying to keep elections available to people like me, someone who is a library worker who doesn't have a lot of money available personally, or a lot of my constituents don't and a lot of my supporters are not in a position of putting a lot of extra money into a lengthy campaign, when you have a set election date, you tend to have a lot of financial pressure being put on particular candidates in trying to get out there.

I think that's something we have to have a discussion about. It's not a simple discussion, because I know it sort of deals with not only the democratic right—we've seen the discussion happen federally, and I'm not sure that seeing huge amounts of money having to come into play is the way I would like to see elections run, be they by-elections or federal or provincial elections.

I have really exhausted my time. I know there is another member who would like to say a bit more on this issue, but I do also want to thank the member for Carleton for his comment about the constituency offices, because not all members have constituency offices, which does raise the point of how citizens within that riding might in fact be able to contact the Speaker, or who would be giving direction and who would be doing that constituency advocacy work? That is another issue I think we have to discuss.

In essence, I am supporting the member for York Centre and his bill and thank you again for the opportunity to speak.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I'm very pleased to rise in support of the bill introduced by the member for York Centre. I think this is a bill and a principle that is far beyond its time. I was elected in a by-election in the riding of St George-St David on April 1 after a seven-month period in which the riding went unrepresented. There was no one in that riding providing the services of an MPP and the services of an office of an MPP to the people of St George-St David.

Frankly, I fault the Premier for that delay and I think some limitation on the discretion, of the kind proposed by the member for York Centre, is entirely appropriate

because, in truth, that kind of delay in the period of time in which a riding is unrepresented hurts the people who need the help of an MPP the most. It's the people who need access to the kind of assistance an MPP can give on a daily basis about how to access government departments relating to welfare and to Ontario Housing and to all those issues where people may not have other avenues, may not know other ways in which to proceed with what is viewed as a vast bureaucracy of government that weighs down in very many ways on the lives of people.

In some cases, obviously, individuals may have other access points, could know how to access the system through other people, but it's the people who don't have that access who are hurt the most by a long delay before a by-election is called.

1140

I think the initiative in this bill is entirely appropriate and it's high time that it happened, and I congratulate the member for York Centre for bringing it forward. I think we can have some debates around the particulars of flexibility and timing where it's the death of a member or a certain season. Those are details that we can debate later. I think the principle is a highly appropriate one and I think it fits in the context of parliamentary reform that, for example, the member for Etobicoke-Humber in our caucus has been talking about for a while. These are the kinds of issues we need to talk about and address.

I think the member for St Catharines-Brock also raised an important point related to enumeration. Having representation and the right to vote on that representation are fundamental, it seems to me, to the rights citizens have in this province, and the enumeration question is an important one.

I had looked, in my private life, at the possibility of bringing a charter challenge to the quality of enumeration. For example, in the by-election, an entire building in my riding was missed on the enumeration. We had to enumerate it the night before the election and provide special enumeration.

This is not the way to make sure people have the right to vote. It strikes me that there may be a denial of the charter guarantee of a right to vote through that kind of thing, and I think that's another issue we have to look at. I think there are many reforms to the system. This is a good and quality starting point, because in the seven-month period of time that the riding of St George-St David was unrepresented, I knocked on thousands of doors and people were saying: "What can you do to help us? Who's there? Where can we go?"

The Premier's failure to call the by-election, I think, was reprehensible in the eyes of the very people we need to help the most in the system, and I'm very pleased to be able to rise in support of the bill put forward by the member for York Centre.

M. Poirier: Je regarde dans l'Assemblée présente, et nous sommes au moins trois députés qui avons été élus lors d'une élection partielle dans le passé. Je pense que les députés, surtout ceux qui ont été élus dans des élections partielles, sont très bien placés pour apprécier l'importance, le bon sens et la logique du projet de loi tel que proposé par mon collègue de York-Centre.

Je me rappelle, lorsque j'ai été élu dans la partielle de décembre 1984, la circonscription de Prescott et Russell à ce moment-là avait été sans député pour plus de six mois. Pour une circonscription comme la mienne et comme celle de mon collègue de Brant, qui sont des circonscriptions rurales, il y a beaucoup de gens qui, dans le secteur rural, n'ont pas accès aux services comme dans une région urbaine.

On sait très bien, et mon collègue vient justement de le dire, que même dans une région urbaine, il y a des gens qui ont des besoins urgents qui n'ont peut-être pas les ressources pour pouvoir identifier les organismes, les différents services qui pourraient leur venir en aide.

Lorsque mon collègue prédécesseur s'est lancé sur la scène fédérale, lorsque je suis arrivé en poste, il n'y avait aucun bureau, aucun dossier, aucun personnel ou quoi que ce soit. Lors d'une élection partielle, bien sûr, l'Assemblée législative n'a pas les moyens de mettre en marche tous les services de formation des nouveaux députés comme c'est le cas dans une élection générale. C'est injuste pour les commettants parce que même lorsqu'il y a un député en place, les travailleurs du député dans les bureaux de circonscription et à Queen's Park n'ont pas le droit, et ni le député, de faire de la partisannerie.

Donc, si c'est le cas lorsque le député est en poste, c'est sûrement, évidemment, le même cas qui se produit lorsqu'il n'y a pas de député, lorsqu'il y a une vacance. On sait très bien que le personnel ne fait pas de partisannerie dans les bureaux de députés. Les besoins continuent d'exister, et au moment où on se parle, jamais il n'y a eu tant de besoins, de demandes d'aide dans les bureaux de députés. Il est inconcevable d'attendre une éternité avant qu'une prochaine élection ait lieu. Il est inconcevable de fermer les bureaux de députés lorsqu'il y a tant de besoins que la population de l'Ontario a besoin de faire combler. Il est inconcevable de ne pas offrir des services.

Le prochain député qui arrive en poste, je peux vous assurer que cette personne-là, peu importe son affiliation — le nouveau député ou la nouvelle députée est très heureux ou heureuse d'hériter du personnel, des dossiers, d'équipement de bureau, d'expertise et des dossiers des besoins qui ont été comblés sans arrêt depuis le départ de l'ancien député.

C'est un excellent projet de loi. Je félicite mon collègue de York-Centre et j'espère que mes collègues des deux autres partis vont également appuyer ce projet

de loi qui est d'une logique et d'un besoin exemplaires.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I want to take this opportunity to thank the member for York Centre for presenting this bill. I did have it on my list, but according to the luck of the draw on private members' bills, it may be the end of the term before I have the opportunity.

It is very important, and I'm both disappointed and astounded that we stand here today debating a bill that will take a responsibility away from the Premier of the province of Ontario. Why are we taking it away? We are taking it away simply because he has not been fulfilling his responsibility. I find that very difficult to deal with.

I am amazed. It is the simplest responsibility the Premier has, because when there is a vacancy, he only needs to make a memo of a date on which to announce a by-election. He won't do that. He didn't do that: In the case of the riding of Brant-Haldimand, it was without an elected representative for seven months. It's the people who suffer.

I don't know whether the Premier thought it was an advantage to wait. He must have. But I'll tell you what happened: The member from an adjoining riding, the riding of Brantford, who happened to be an NDP member, offered to look after the people. That's convenient for a few people around Brantford, but not for the north and not for the south of my riding.

What happened? That was fine, except that many people do not want to deal with an NDP member. In fact, there are people who will not vote NDP. So what happened? That executive assistant had been the NDP candidate in the previous election and he became the NDP candidate in the by-election. Some people say that's not fair. Some people say he had a great advantage over a farm boy from a gravel road in a rural township, inexperienced in running large campaigns, which I was. That is what it was: It was stacked. The people said it to me. It was not proper.

We had two constituency offices, one in the lower end to serve the south and one in the north to serve the northern people. What could they do? Perhaps the member for Oxford helped out and had some of the people go over there, but the staff was dispersed, the offices were leased to other people, and there it was: a backlog of problems and concerns that the people could not have resolved, that took over a year to resolve.

Of course, I'm slow, I realize I'm very slow and somewhat backward, but it was over a year before that backlog was cleared up. That's what they do to the constituents of Brant-Haldimand. That's what you did. You might have won the seat if you hadn't been so ignorant on the matter. I think it's a disgrace.

Therefore, I stand before you calmly pleading for support for this bill, because it is an excellent bill. The

matter needs to be cleared up. We talk about adverse weather. Well, in by-elections it's normal, I believe, for the government member to be defeated. That's a given, so there shouldn't be the big concern. If it's going to happen, it's going to happen, let's face it. But I find that if people want to vote—and they do—they will vote, they will get there to vote.

I would like to again thank the member for bringing this forward. We've done a check on all the by-elections that have been held recently and seen the various periods, but I again stress the fact that the constituents of Brant-Haldimand—and I would point out that we have lots of provincial ridings adjoining mine. There are nine, and they are all held by the NDP, so I suppose there would be lots of help there; nine ridings adjoining mine. But unfortunately, mine is an island held by another party, and I really feel very strongly that the Premier could have—is it because the Premier is too busy to see that democracy lives in Brant-Haldimand? I can't think of any other reason. It's most unfortunate.

1150

When the Honourable Bob Nixon was appointed by the Premier—and it was a government appointment; it was an appointment by the Premier, so he well knew there was going to be a vacancy—wouldn't it have been the courteous, the gentlemanly thing and the proper thing to do at that time to say, "Therefore, with this appointment, there's a vacancy in the riding of Brant-Haldimand; an election day will be on a specified date"?

The vacancy occurred in Brant-Haldimand July 31, 1991. A member was elected—it happened to be me this time—on March 5, 1992. If we had used the formula in the bill presented today by the member for York Centre, the vacancy would have been filled on October 14.

The reason given by the Premier was, at one point in time, "We don't want it to interfere with the municipal elections." The municipalities are required to follow rules on vacancies by this assembly. We have the rules in place, but we don't have it for ourselves. As a result, it didn't happen. It should have happened, could have happened under these rules if the Premier had any care or concern about it—although he did have some concern, because he went to the town of Dunnville during the by-election and made two promises, neither of which has been kept, and they haven't heard or seen him since. The promises were made, saying, "In spite of who is elected as member, we will do this and this."

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): Say it isn't so.

Mr Eddy: Yes, and it's most unfortunate. Anyway, I just very calmly appeal to the members to support this bill, and I'm pleased that so many who spoke this morning—all who spoke, I believe—have spoken in favour of the bill submitted by the member for York

Centre, giving specific timetables for the holding of by-elections to fill vacancies in ridings for this House. I appreciate the concern.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): It's indeed a pleasure to be able to participate in this debate. I wanted to say right off the bat that I support the principles and the concept of Bill 57, and I think the member has done well in bringing this issue forward.

However, I'm going to try to refrain from the kind of partisanship that the previous speaker alluded to, because what happens more often than not—

Mr Eddy: Partisanship? You had the partisanship.

Mr Perruzza: He has a particular axe to grind, and I understand that. Some people come into this place with chips on their shoulder, and I understand that too. They have every right to bring in those chips and they have every right to bring in those axes to grind. I don't prescribe to them. I don't support that kind of thing, but I'll respect people's right to be able to bring that kind of thing into this place.

To simply point the finger and say that the Premier of the day, the Premier who's here today, is the one who's somehow got this privilege and this power is absolutely a sham, because you well know Peterson had that privilege and that prerogative before him, and Davis had that privilege and that prerogative before this Premier, and Robarts before that, and Frost before that.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Downsview, you have the floor.

Mr Perruzza: But I agree with the principle and the concept that says that no one individual in this place should be above Parliament. I believe that Parliament is supreme. This chair doesn't belong to Anthony Perruzza. This chair belongs to the people of Downsview, to the electoral district of Downsview, as every other seat, as every other desk in this place belongs to a district and the people around the province.

Those people in those districts have the right to representation, have the right to a voice, have the right to a vote. They may elect someone and then find that the particular individual doesn't reflect their point of view, and they have the right at the next opportunity, at the next election, to fire that person and to elect someone new. They have all of those rights, and that is essentially the kind of right that we need to fight for, that we need to try to preserve.

That's not to say that the traditional right of the Premier or the head of the executive council in this place, whether in a majority Parliament or in a minority Parliament, doesn't today have the right to exercise flexibility in determining when a by-election is going to be called. I'm not going to lay blame, and I'm not going to point a finger at any one individual for using political tactics to call a by-election and win a seat or

have a good showing or any of those things. Quite frankly, while I believe the current Premier has done it, I also believe that other premiers before this Premier have done it as well. However, it's time that we look at this practice, that we look at downsizing the authority of any one leader of any executive council and give it back to the people of each and every constituency.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for York Centre, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr Sorbara: Even if this bill doesn't become law, and I think it will be, it certainly has given rise to a great debate. I appreciated the comments of my friends from Downsview, from Brant-Haldimand, from Prescott and Russell and others. It has given rise to a good debate, and I just want to take these two minutes to answer some of the questions that arose.

First of all, to my friend from Simcoe East, who questioned two things: Firstly, I would say that where a vacancy occurs in the last year of the life of a Parliament, the law already stipulates that a by-election need not be held, and my bill doesn't change that.

Secondly, as to the non-partisanship of the constituency office when the seat becomes vacant, that's a very good point. I think the thrust of this bill is to immediately place the constituency office in the hands of the Speaker and to ensure that there is no hint of partisanship in the operation of that constituency office during that period.

My friend from Carleton suggested a degree of flexibility, and I think he's right about that. If the bill were amended in committee to provide for a two- or three-week window, taking into consideration that the bill as presently formulated might fall very close to a day like Christmas or Easter or Labour Day, I think that is appropriate as well. But if that amendment is adopted, I would place the ability to identify the specific day not in the hands of the Premier but in the hands of the Speaker as well and let him or her identify that date.

Finally, I should tell my friends that if this bill passes second reading here, I'm going to be asking that the bill go to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly and that the refinements can take place during committee debate and that it be expeditiously considered there and given third reading and become law in the province of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): We will deal first with ballot item number 19, standing in the name of Mr Lessard. If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Mr Lessard has moved second reading of Bill 58, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

ELECTION STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES ÉLECTIONS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): We will now deal with ballot item number 20, standing in the name of Mr Sorbara.

If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Mr Sorbara has moved second reading of Bill 57, An Act to amend the Election Act and the Legislative Assembly Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Pursuant to standing order 94(k), the bill is referred to the committee of the whole.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): Mr Speaker, might I seek the consent of the House to have the bill referred to the Legislative Assembly committee?

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of this question will please rise and remain standing.

All those opposed will please rise and remain standing.

A majority of the House being in agreement with the request of Mr Sorbara, this bill stands referred to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): Mr Speaker, on a point of privilege: I wonder if we could have unanimous consent of the House to have the previous bill referred to the same committee?

The Deputy Speaker: No, that can't be done.

All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, I do now leave the chair. The House will resume at 1:30 this afternoon.

The House recessed at 1202.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CARABRAM

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): I hold in my hand not an airline ticket, but a trip to 20 places around the world without leaving the good city of Brampton. I invite all of you and all the people viewing to, of course, attend Carabram. It starts tomorrow and will continue right over the weekend, and it looks like we're going to have excellent weather once again.

I also want to thank the some 2,500 to 3,000 volunteers in the city who commit themselves every year not just to participating in Carabram, but starting about a week after that, to planning for next year's Carabram. On behalf of the province of Ontario and all the members of the Legislature, I'm sure we want to congratulate them.

I'd also like to thank the corporate sponsors who are good enough to provide funding. This operates in the black; in fact, hundreds of thousands of dollars. It's one thing that doesn't cost the government anything.

I submit to the province that it's a great way of getting to know one another, to understand one another's ways, our differences, our likes, to savour the sights, sounds and tastes of 20 different countries without ever leaving Brampton.

I suggest to you that it's probably one of the greatest multicultural events in this province, in this country, and it's a way of doing it in a friendly, neighbourhood way without having to spend taxpayers' dollars for it. In fact, Carabram itself provides buses free of charge to take you from pavilion to pavilion, and that's paid out of the moneys that it makes. The moneys that are left over are distributed among the various groups that participate and they can use those to further their own multicultural heritage.

I invite all of you out to have a happy Carabram.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSE

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I rise in the Legislature today to remind the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations that as a member of cabinet, she is accountable to the people of Ontario.

I could talk about casinos, but instead I will concentrate on the \$50 corporation filing fee. On September 7 of last year, I asked the minister during question period if it was the NDP government's intention to make the corporation filing fee an annual tax on incorporated and non-profit businesses. The minister didn't answer my question but instead rambled on about other matters. When the Treasurer announced his budget in May, it was no surprise that in fact this filing fee had become an annual tax on corporations.

This is another tax on small businesses and non-profit corporations in Ontario by the NDP government. This is another example of how the NDP does not understand that small business can lead Ontario in job creation and out of this recession, if only given the opportunity to do so. This \$50 fee is one more nail in the coffin for small businesses and non-profit corporations in Ontario.

The minister has not been forthright with the people of Ontario in her answers to questions brought forward by myself or the member for Parry Sound regarding casinos.

Question period is a democratic forum in which the concerns of the people of Ontario are heard and the opposition parties can hold the governing party accountable for its actions. The sooner the minister realizes this and actually starts answering questions brought forward by the members of the opposition, the sooner Ontarians will have faith that democracy is still alive and well in Ontario.

ONTARIO MEDAL FOR GOOD CITIZENSHIP

Mr George Dadamo (Windsor-Sandwich): I bring to the attention of this Legislature today an event which took place last week here at Queen's Park. Twelve outstanding individuals were honoured for the dedication and kindness which they give to their fellow Ontarians, people who give of their time willingly and freely in the quest of creating a better atmosphere in the communities in which they reside.

The Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship is awarded to those who show selfless dedication and concern for the wellbeing of men and women: the sick, the elderly or the disabled.

One of the those recipients was Dr Gordon Jasey of Windsor. Dr Jasey is a physician by profession, but clearly able to devote his time to patients, family and of course his community. Dr Jasey is founder of the Windsor Islamic Association and has worked tirelessly to make Ontarians of Islamic faith feel at home culturally and spiritually. He has worked with the Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County and has been actively involved in the city's race and ethnocultural relations committee.

Last week, I had the pleasure to meet Dr Jasey and his family as they accompanied him here to Toronto to receive this award before the Lieutenant Governor and also the Premier of the province.

I'd like to offer my congratulations to all 12 Ontario medal winners, and especially to Dr Gordon Mohammed Jasey of Windsor for many years of love and attention to his Islamic faith. His nominator has put it succinctly, "This award will be a fitting tribute to a man for his long years of selfless and dedicated volunteer service to the wellbeing of his fellow Ontarians."

ALCOHOL ABUSE

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I rise in the House today in order to raise an issue of some consequence in my riding and to ask the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations to assist me in dealing with the issue.

People in the riding, including The T.O! Magazine and constituents at my office, have raised a concern about the availability of cooking wine for non-cooking purposes. The wine is cheap at \$2.50 a bottle and is quite potent, ranging from 35% to 40% alcohol content, and is available in variety stores. The high salt content makes it exempt from liquor licensing provisions, but while the salt is said to render it undrinkable, it has not stopped many unfortunate people from diluting it, mixing it or in some cases drinking it straight.

The volume of cooking wine sold is quite large, and empty bottles are littering the Cabbagetown neighbourhood in the riding of St George-St David and the back steps of many local businesses. Members of the Old Cabbagetown Business Improvement Area and Cabbagetown residents are concerned about this form of alcohol abuse and the related problems of broken glass and intoxicated individuals on the street, and associated nuisance issues.

I hope the minister realizes this is a concern and will assist the community in addressing it. I recognize that cooking wine when used properly is not a problem, and I understand that it is an important ingredient in the cuisine of many cultures. I hope we can address this in a way that is sensitive to those cultures.

ORILLIA SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I would like to invite the people of Ontario to attend the 16th annual Orillia Scottish Festival, July 16 and 17 in the Sunshine City.

Approximately 10,000 people are expected to converge on Orillia to attend this year's Scottish festival, which is sponsored by the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 34, Orillia, to honour Clan Farquharson. The chair of this year's festival is Helen MacDonald, and her committee welcomes you.

The Scottish festival kicks off the night of July 16 with a dance at the Legion. Scottish Highland dancing and the pipe and drum competitions take place at Couchiching beach park Saturday morning and more than 20 pipe bands from across Ontario are expected to march in the parade at noon.

The history of Scotland is long and glorious and dates back to Roman times. The Scottish community has made a number of impressive contributions to the economic, agricultural and cultural wellbeing of the province of Ontario.

You will no doubt recall that on December 19, 1991, this Legislature approved a resolution from my col-

league the member for Grey that proclaims the sixth day of April as Tartan Day. The sixth day of April is of historical significance to the Scottish community because it marks the anniversary of the declaration of Scottish independence in 1320.

Celebrate the rich and colourful Scottish heritage by visiting the Sunshine City on July 16 and 17 for the 16th annual Orillia Scottish Festival.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PLAN

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): In the recent weeks, we've heard numerous accounts from the opposition of how the government has caused the high cost of health care through mismanagement. I have a letter here from a constituent that truly shows where the problem lies.

This constituent is 71 years old and is required to take four different prescriptions each month, with 30 pills in each prescription. Two months ago, the drugstore started giving the man eight bottles of pills with 15 in each, with the name of his doctor on four and his doctor's fill-in on the other four. The province is being charged for eight prescriptions instead of the four.

The constituent found a number of his friends were having the same experience. He said, "I believe the drugstore in question is just picking here and there on different people where they can, so OHIP cannot detect such crooked misgivings."

Is this the fault of the government's mismanagement or corporate greed? There are those who will see the system destroyed in the name of profit. Is it any wonder that this government is in support of the action taken by the Honourable Ruth Grier to control the system?

1340

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I want to take a few moments this afternoon to address the Minister of Health, who is not here yet but I am sure she will be later this afternoon.

Members, I think on all sides, are increasingly concerned that as we approach midsummer, we do not yet have from the Minister of Health and the Rae government the particular cuts that they plan in the area of health policy. We all know that the government is in the course of redesigning the drug benefit program. We know, because some months ago the Treasurer told us that fully \$195 million would be stripped out of the drug benefit program this year.

I say to the minister, who has now joined us, that she surely owes it to the people of Ontario, to pharmacists and to others to at the earliest time put the specifics of her plan before the province. She is congenitally unable to mouth the words "user fees," but it is absolutely obvious that user fees are going to be introduced in a substantial and a significant way. It is time, I say to the Minister of Health, to put the policies in more particular

terms before the Legislature and before the province.

Similarly, Bill 50 contemplates dramatic changes to the way in which we organize medical manpower. The small hospitals that I represent are increasingly frustrated and angry because they do not yet know how they are going to specifically have to deal with the government program. Minister, I say to you in all candour, we need to know more specifically what your plans are.

MEMBER FOR ORIOLE

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I rise today in praise of the member for Oriole; yes, that's right, the member for Oriole. It kind of slips off the tongue, doesn't it?

As you know, the member for Oriole has of late been especially supportive of my caucus and party, and today I'd like to return the compliment. In specifics, I wish to congratulate the member for Oriole for her introduction of Bill 71 which, as everybody knows, would repeal the commercial concentration tax introduced by her own party. This is a good start.

However, while the member for Oriole is on a roll, so to say, I would encourage her to table even more bills to get rid of even more Liberal tax grabs. Would the member for Oriole care today to introduce a bill to roll back the provincial sales tax to 7%, where it was before the Liberal Party got its greedy little mitts on it? How about a bill to knock the gasoline tax back to where it was before the Liberals jacked it up?

Might I suggest she also get rid of the Liberal Party's payroll tax or the Liberals' land transfer tax increases or the countless fee increases the Liberal Party pretends to be so upset about these days, or any one of the other 33 new taxes and whopping tax increases the member for Oriole and her party dumped on Ontarians during their five miserable years at the till.

Let me say very directly that I and my caucus colleagues in the Ontario PC Party will support any bill presented by the member for Oriole or any member of her caucus that rolls back any of the Liberal's punitive tax increases.

BLOOD DISORDERS

Mr Robert Frankford (Scarborough East): The most common genetic conditions worldwide are blood disorders known as hemoglobinopathies. Sick cell disease and thalassemia cause lifelong disabilities in those who are affected.

As our population changes, the number of people carrying the genes is increasing. About 10% of Afro-Caribbeans are estimated to be sickle carriers. The majority are heterozygote and have absolutely no clinical problems, but a child who inherits the gene from both parents faces recurrent crises and complications.

Fortunately, there is much that can be done to help sickle disease through counselling, education and

advocacy. There's considerable clinical experience being developed, and I would like to mention the work of Dr Nancy Olivieri at the Hospital for Sick Children on a drug called butyrate, which may be a real advance in treatment.

I'd particularly like to bring to the attention of the House the work of the Sickle Cell Association of Ontario. Entirely funded through donations and fund-raising events, this organization shows admirably what can be achieved through dedicated self-help. By education and raising awareness, it helps the community and health professionals in dealing with serious problems in this area. It advocates for coordinated approaches to screening and treatment such as are developing in other jurisdictions.

I wanted to take this opportunity to publicly compliment the Sickle Cell Association and its many volunteers on the outstanding job they do, motivated by their wish to relieve avoidable suffering in the community. Their phone number is 789-2855.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REFORM

RÉFORME DU SYSTÈME D'AIDE SOCIALE

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): I'm happy to inform members today of some changes to the social assistance system in the province, and I want, before getting into the statement, to acknowledge the work that's been done on this issue by my predecessor, the Honourable Marion Boyd.

Today I'm announcing that the Ontario government is going to scrap the province's welfare system as we know it. We are going to replace welfare with new programs that help people get training, get education and get back to work.

For the first time since the modern welfare system was created in the 1950s and 1960s, we are going to focus on helping people get back to work.

J'annonce aujourd'hui que le gouvernement de l'Ontario entend abolir le système d'aide sociale que nous connaissons actuellement. Nous allons le remplacer par de nouveaux programmes qui donneront accès à l'éducation, à la formation et au marché du travail.

Pour la première fois depuis la création du système moderne d'aide sociale, c'est-à-dire depuis les années 50 et 60, nous allons nous appliquer à aider les gens à réintégrer le marché du travail.

We are going to continue providing financial support to people in need, but we will do so in a way that takes away the barriers to work that are now in the system. We will provide adequate and reliable support to people who are unable to work.

We are also going to provide parents with the financial support they need to provide for their children's basic needs without having to rely on welfare. Again,

we are going to provide these benefits in a way that supports parents in their desire to work.

Our plans are outlined in a public paper that I released today. The public paper is called *Turning Point, New Support Programs for People with Low Incomes*.

Before I talk about our new programs, I want to say a few things about our current system.

If there's one thing that just about everyone agrees with, it's that Ontario's welfare system isn't working. It isn't helping unemployed people to learn new skills and find jobs. It isn't helping parents to provide for their children's basic needs. By this I mean not only parents who receive social assistance, but also parents who are working full-time at low-wage jobs.

It's a confusing system. It's made up of two tiers: a family benefits allowance system operated by the province and a general welfare allowance system run by the municipalities. Each of these systems has its own legislation, regulations, policies, guidelines, administrations and categories.

It's an expensive system. Over the past few years, the number of people needing welfare has skyrocketed. The recession and free trade have put more people out of work and on to welfare than at any time in our province's history. Today, one in nine Ontarians, more than 1.2 million people, relies on welfare.

Since coming to office in 1990, our government has taken a number of steps to improve the welfare system, including increasing benefits by 13.5% and hiring new staff to prevent fraud and help single parents find and obtain child support. Each of these changes has helped to create a better and more efficient safety net. But they haven't changed one basic reality: The number of people needing social assistance continues to grow.

It's time to do more, therefore, than build a better safety net. It's time to help people make real changes in their lives through training and jobs.

The Ontario government will be creating three new programs that promote independence and provide fair support to people with low incomes. The first of these programs, the Ontario child income program, will provide a monthly cheque to parents with low incomes, including parents who are working full-time, to help them provide for their children's basic needs.

At the moment, the welfare system provides children's benefits. This approach puts a roadblock in the path of parents who want to work. For unemployed parents, taking a job and leaving the welfare system means giving up children's benefits and losing access to other supports such as prescription drugs. It also denies much-needed benefits to parents who work full-time at wages that are so low that they aren't able to provide for their children's basic needs.

The Ontario child income program will take children's benefits out of the welfare system. It will provide

a monthly cheque to all low-income families in Ontario, including low-income families with parents working full-time.

The size of the cheque that each family receives will depend on its income as reported in its income tax returns. Families with the lowest incomes will receive the largest benefits. The total benefits that a family is eligible to receive will depend on the number of children in the family.

1350

The Ontario child income program will help parents provide for their children's needs without having to go on welfare. But unemployed adults also have needs, and that brings us to the second program: the Ontario adult benefit.

The Ontario adult benefit will help adults meet their basic needs while making the transition to work. It will also provide long-term income to those who aren't able to work.

The Ontario adult benefit will replace the complicated two-tiered FBA/GWA system with a streamlined, unified system with one set of rules that will be applied in the same way across the province.

Adults will be provided with a single monthly cheque that will take into account the cost of food, clothing, shelter and personal needs. Eligibility for the benefit will be determined by a needs test that measures income and assets.

We will provide a long-term income supplement to Ontario adult benefit recipients who aren't able to work. We will also continue to provide extra financial support to persons with disabilities to cover disability-related expenses.

Providing benefit cheques is one form of support, but most people who are now on social assistance will need a much broader range of supports if they are to return to work.

We believe that most people want to work. But we also realize that it's hard to find work when you have difficulty reading and writing. It's hard to find work when changing technologies and new industries mean that your skills are no longer wanted. Even when your skills are up to date, it's hard to work when you have children but no access to child care, or when you have a disability but no supports to overcome that disability.

That brings us then to the third major new program. The Ontario government will create a new system called Job Link to help Ontario adult benefit recipients prepare for and find work.

Job Link will be available to Ontario adult benefit recipients who are able to work. It will help clients develop a personalized plan that outlines the education, training and other supports they'll need to return to work.

When Job Link is fully developed, it will place

participants in over 100,000 places each year in Ontario's high schools, community colleges, training courses and pre-employment programs and connect them to apprenticeship programs and workplaces. Job Link will also provide people with the supports they need to take advantage of such opportunities.

Over the next 18 months, we will be having discussions with groups such as the Council of Consumers, the federal and municipal governments and workers and their representatives. We will also be making decisions on key delivery and design issues.

I've already met with a number of key stakeholders and told them how important their input will be to our decision-making. I've also met with Chief Gordon Peters, the Ontario regional chief, to begin discussions on a parallel process for social assistance reform that respects the inherent right of first nations to self-government.

We intend to introduce the legislation to set up the new programs by late 1993. I expect the Ontario child income program, the Ontario adult benefit and Job Link to be in operation in 1995.

Given that we still have to make decisions on a number of key design and delivery issues, I can't indicate today the exact size of the investment needed to create the new programs. But I want to make it clear that this is not a cost containment exercise. It is indeed an investment in people's skills.

In the short run, we will be investing more money to create the capacity to actively help people to get back to work. That capacity does not exist in the current system. In the long run, the new programs will be less expensive than the old system since they will reduce both the number of people needing help and the level of duplication and waste in the current system.

With this announcement, Ontario has reached a turning point in the way in which it provides support to people with low incomes.

The Ontario child income program, the Ontario adult benefit and Job Link will be part of a government-wide effort to provide greater support to people with low incomes. They will match up with initiatives such as Jobs Ontario Training, new pay equity legislation, employment equity, improvements to the minimum wage, expanded access to child care, reform of the Ontario drug benefits program and increased non-profit housing.

I'm proud to be part of this sweeping change. The welfare system doesn't work. It's time to build an active system that meets the real needs of all Ontarians and to build a better future for our children.

Mrs Yvonne O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau): I hope that what the minister has stated today has some foundation. I hope some of it will come true. I hope those people who are going to be affected will truly be consulted,

whether they be social assistance recipients or whether they be members of the first nations. I hope you're really going to tackle child poverty, as we know that more than 40% of the social assistance recipients in this province are children. And I hope you will abide by the announcement you made earlier today that you're going to take the market basket approach, which was part of this document, *Transitions: the real cost of shelter and food for people*.

You say you want further advice, Mr Minister. Look at this book, with over 250 recommendations, most of which have not been enacted, *Back on Track*, your own document, and you want further advice; *Time for Action*, which was a cry by people to get things going, and today you are telling people they have to wait two more years, 1995.

I'm sorry, today's announcement fills me with doubts and fears. You described it earlier this morning as government policy. Mr Minister, government policy, I'm afraid, has to have legislation and has to have a financial commitment, and every single figure connected with this whole announcement is fuzzy, if it's there at all. There's no financial commitment, there's no projection, there's no budget.

You say it is not a cost containment exercise. Mr Minister, after the things we've been through in this last week, and in the changes you're going to make to the STEP program on August 1, but two weeks ahead, you are really being contradictory when you talk about no cost containment for those who are on social assistance but much for those who are in the workforce.

To say the least, your figures are fuzzy. To say the least also, your partnerships are weak. You know that this program you've announced today depends on a strong partnership with the federal government to get the data you need for your income support and child support programs. You haven't worked that out.

You have also got to work out much with the municipalities. The municipalities at this moment are hardly speaking to you because of the expenditure control plan and the social contract, and we don't know whether you will do the same thing here as you did with the social contract: impose your will. The disentanglement talks are up in the air.

Everything in this major thrust is filled with fuzziness, with nebulousness. Projections, whether they be budget deficits of this NDP government or whether they be child care projections or whether they be Jobs Ontario placements, never come true. They are promises, not policies. There's no sense of trust built in the communities that you're trying to serve, and your credibility is all over the place.

How are we going to believe that this program is any different? How are the people who are affected going to believe that? You say in one document that it's 18

months of discussion; in another document I got today it's 24 months of discussion. Do you realize how close that is to the end of your mandate? Discussion, discussion, discussion.

You are talking about major changes, and indeed they are. They are in changes of income testing and needs testing, and they're very different than the long-term care testing because you're going to talk about income and assets, and that certainly puts many people in jeopardy who are on social assistance for a short period of time.

Everything about this document, and certainly your press conference proved it, is very difficult to interpret, because you yourself say: "There are no details. We have not got the real data yet. We're going to find that out in the next few months."

So you have made no real commitment to get people back to work, which is the major consideration in this province. You have made no real commitment to more accessible child care. You've made no real commitment to educational settings that have long waiting lists and getting the people that you say Job Link is going to put in those educational systems.

The statement of the minister is a sweeping change and it's built on a foundation of sand, and again he continues to throw up that the real problem in this province, the recession, is based strictly on the free trade agreement or something that happens up in Ottawa, failing always to look in ourselves, within the NDP government, at all of the things that are being done in a monetary way to stop any economic growth or any creation of jobs.

1400

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): I guess having been in this House for eight and a half years and listening to the governing members talk about issues around poverty and child poverty, I can't imagine, after waiting all these years, that the best this government can come up with three years into its mandate is what it has referred to as a turning point.

By the minister's own admission at the press conference this morning, this is only a general direction. There's no money being spent here, there are no regulatory changes here, there's no legislation; there isn't even an accurate framework and time frame for consultation.

The fact of the matter is that this government has been aware of dozens of reports. We've had 274 recommendations in the Transitions document that came in in 1988, we had the member for Hamilton West and the then member for Scarborough East lead a whole group, a poverty march, to Queen's Park to deal with the problem of food banks, and the minority government report on all the things that this government was committed to in order to eradicate food banks in Ontario.

The government then, under the then minister, Zanana Akande, brought in another report, Back on Track. This was trumpeted as the socialists were getting back on track to help the poor in this province. Again, a rather large document of consultation. It went nowhere.

Then we get a new minister, Mrs Boyd, from London. In May 1992 she comes out with another big report, full of recommendations, lots of consultation, Time for Action.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Did you read it?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Jackson: People think things are going to be happening real soon.

In fact I want to quote from an article in the Globe and Mail where the then minister, Marion Boyd, said that she was excited about radical changes that were coming to Ontario's welfare system. She said that she was confident about the new way she was going to approach it, of combining the systems, and it would take effect on January 1, 1994, and be handled by the province—the then minister's own words. That is some precious few months away. Where are we today?

I want to replay for members of this House just exactly what was said by the minister in today's announcement, because we still can't understand why he made the announcement today in the first place. I'll give you a sampling of the press conference.

Question: "How many fewer will be on welfare by 1995?" Answer: "We don't know." Question to the minister: "How long before the province can realize some savings?" Answer: "Perhaps late 1995 or some time into 1996, but this depends on the availability of jobs."

Next question to the minister: "How do you determine who will be able to work?" since they want to divide these people. Answer: "We don't know." "How will you fit this disentanglement with municipalities, which are already in disarray, where some of the costs of delivery are currently borne by the municipalities?" Answer from the minister: "That's a very good question. It becomes more important for us to resolve this issue."

Another question: "How many dollars will be budgeted for this fiscal year?" Answer by the minister to the press gallery: "We don't anticipate any new dollars." Question: "Where will you find new spaces in our colleges and universities, when existing students are already being denied access and turned away at the doors?" Answer from the minister: "This is a challenge. We need to talk to our colleges and we have to consider new expenditures some time in the future."

You were the minister responsible for OTAB for the last two years, you were the minister responsible for colleges and universities, and you now have to go and talk to your former deputy ministers and senior staff

about what you're going to be doing for seniors.

There are two important things that are missing from this announcement today.

Mr Perruzza: You don't know who has responsibility for what.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Jackson: The first most important principle is the shared responsibility of social assistance recipients and taxpayers, as set out in the Transitions document. No comment from this government about the concept of shared responsibility.

The second was accountability. In a one-hour press conference, not one reference to the issue of accountability, when Ontario's own Provincial Auditor has clearly said that the amount of overpayment and fraud and unnecessary payments in social assistance in this province could be \$700 million. This announcement is two years too early, because there's nothing in it.

MINISTERIAL INFORMATION

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: I have been endeavouring to get information about this announcement the minister made today. We've made several calls to his office to get hold of the statements, to get hold of some documents that would tell us what the government's position was on this. We have not been able to do that. I know the critics of the opposition parties have received information, and that's fair enough, but there are other people in the House.

My thanks to the member of the government who was willing to share this with me.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): It appears that the member has had his point of privilege replied to. But I must say to the member that the standing orders are quite clear that when a minister is making a statement material must be provided to the critics of the opposition parties, but beyond that there is no other further obligation. Normally, all members of the assembly will receive the information in due course.

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: If I could just clarify for the member opposite, my understanding was that copies were made available to all members. Indeed, if something has gone wrong in that process, I'll be happy to check into it.

The Speaker: I appreciate the minister's point of order. Indeed, there is always an effort to provide material to all the members. It goes through our system downstairs, and occasionally members do not get the information on time.

Interjections.

The Speaker: We'll start over once we have the attention of the House. It is time once again for oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REFORM

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I have a question to the Minister of Community and Social Services in relation to his announcement today. At a time when his government is cutting funding to education facilities—colleges, universities, secondary and elementary schools—to seniors, to day care, right across the board, the minister has made an announcement which, even by his statement, is a program of uncontrolled cost.

I would like the minister to tell us today when the first person will be accepted for this program in Ontario and the series of supports that will be available and how much that first person is going to cost the system as he or she is accepted into this support system.

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): I appreciate the question. As I've indicated both here in the House and this morning in the statement, the time line for implementation is 1995.

But beyond that I have to say I find the question a bit puzzling, because I think implied, if not explicitly, in the question is a question of additional cost and what that will be, when I believe, if I heard correctly, the critic for the Liberal Party, in dealing with her response to my statement, was in fact being critical of our not moving fast enough to spend these additional dollars to get the system up and running.

We have said very clearly that we believe that in order to make these substantive changes we do need to be prepared to spend some additional dollars. The bulk of those will happen in 1995 when the new system kicks into place. We believe that by doing this we will be able to substantially decrease the number of people over time who have to rely on social assistance. That's where the real savings will come.

1410

Mr Elston: We already know that the access to the Ontario drug benefit plan forms a part of the program that was announced today by the Minister of Community and Social Services. He has told us what we already know, that the Minister of Health is working on the funding of that part of the system. We already know she is chopping some \$195 million out of the Ontario drug benefit program. Obviously that is going to form part of the support for your program, Mr Minister of Community and Social Services. We already know that the Minister of Health intends to raise \$150 million by way of requiring seniors to pay increased costs in nursing homes and other facilities.

Can the minister confirm to us today that the way this government intends to fund its program is by requiring seniors and others on assistance under the ODB plan to pay the price for their government's new-policy tinkering?

Hon Mr Silipo: I can confirm to the member that is

not our intention. I believe that the discussions my colleague the Minister of Health is involved in will bring to the government some useful advice that then the minister will bring forward to cabinet for discussions and decisions on how to change the drug benefit plan.

But I think, as she has stated and certainly as the consultation process states, what we want to do is to broaden the base of eligibility so that people with low incomes, whether they're on social assistance or not, will be able to have access to drug benefits coverage. That is very much part of what we are doing with respect to the child benefit within the social assistance system.

It is not our intent to simply move dollars around. We are talking here about some additional dollars that we need to spend, and we haven't played around with throwing around figures at this point, not because we want to hide anything but simply because we are still working very much at determining those figures, and we don't think that it's appropriate to bandy about figures until we know exactly what we're talking about.

Mr Elston: I understand that the minister is trying to let everybody out in the public audience think that they don't have any idea of the numbers that are involved or anything, but knowing as we do, because we've been involved in government over these many years—I for over 12 years in opposition, then in government, and now in opposition again—we know that before a program is brought forward, before there are any approvals for an announcement to be made, there are target numbers. There are gross numbers in terms of what a program is supposed to cost, what it's going to start to cost in the first year, in the second year and up to maturity.

I ask again for the minister to tell us straight up what the numbers are that he and his ministry have generated in terms of cost and when those costs are going to begin to run. I want the minister to tell us today what is the cost of his 24-month consultation going to be to the province of Ontario and how he is funding that.

Hon Mr Silipo: Let me just work back from there. The consultation will take place through a number of meetings that we will arrange from the ministry, in which we will be asking people throughout the province and particularly people who have a particular interest in any of the important areas, including the municipalities, the unions involved and a variety of groups and individuals, and that will happen in a direct fashion. I don't expect that is going to cost great bundles of money, but I'd be quite happy, if the member is interested, in providing those figures as they are determined.

The other thing is that I can say to the member, yes, of course we have an overall sense in a very preliminary way of what the overall reform will cost. I've indicated very clearly that the time line is 1995. This I can say

very clearly to the member: Prior to us coming forward with the details of the reform package, we will certainly be indicating in a very public fashion the exact costs of the programs. We are not interested in hiding anything.

What we are doing now is simply setting out the general direction and the policy that the government intends to follow, not another discussion process just in a vacuum. This is a government policy; this is the direction that we are intent on proceeding with.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Silipo: We are going to be doing a lot of good work over the next number of months to get at those answers that we need to get, together with the people who will be affected.

Mr Elston: That's outrageous. They needed a good announcement for the day after the social contract being rammed through, and that's what they did.

JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I would like to ask a question of the Attorney General. Yesterday the Attorney General, when speaking about the justice system, made the comment that the public doesn't understand the justice system, that in fact a particular case which everybody is interested in these days was being misunderstood by a lot of people in terms of sentence and other things. I would like the Attorney General to tell us today more fully what the public doesn't understand about the justice system and what it is that she thinks she can do to make them understand better.

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I'm glad the member asked the question, because I think there are a lot of misconceptions about the justice system and that in fact governments in the past and our government have not done as much as we could to ensure that there is a general level of education and understanding about how the system functions and what it can be expected to do.

One of the issues that we need to be very clear about is that when there is any case in front of the court, the judge in that case must deal with the facts as they are presented in the court: the case as it is presented, the facts as they are presented, the representations of counsel as they are presented.

The task of a judge is to make a judgement based on what is presented in court. It is important that judges be independent and not be affected by the kind of inflammatory issues that sometimes get raised outside the court, because that is not the purview of the decision-making that a judge makes in the court, and that was the comment that I was making yesterday.

Mr Elston: There are several things that are not quite understood by the public. Is it the minister's feeling that the item commonly called plea bargaining

in the court system, in the judicial system, is not well understood, and would you tell us what you are planning to do about the issue of plea bargaining so that the public understands that better?

Hon Mrs Boyd: Again, I am glad that the member asked the question, because there's been an activity going on in the province with wide consultation called the Martin commission, which is looking at ways in which we can make our justice system more streamlined, that we can focus our attention on serious crime, and how we can ensure that interpersonal crime, particularly crimes of violence, gets the kind of attention from our justice system that all of us want it to obtain.

We have received the report and it is being printed as we speak. I expect in the next couple of weeks that in our discussions around the Martin commission findings, we will have an opportunity to discuss the various aspects of plea bargaining as well as issues around screening, disclosure of evidence and other matters that were taken into account by that committee, and that committee had the benefit of advice from the bar, from the bench and from all aspects of the criminal justice system.

Mr Elston: It's interesting that the minister is going to have the people of the province understand plea bargaining a little bit better, because I know, like a lot of the people in the system, that the Attorney General's own department is going around to crown attorneys now telling them not to conduct as many trials in this province.

Will you in fact confirm that your ministry is forcing crown attorneys not to carry on trials and thereby reduce the number of trials that are being held in the various courts around the province, thereby forcing more plea bargaining, more reduced sentences, probably, in the court system, on the crown attorney system? Will you confirm that this in fact is your strategy, to implement your cost savings in this province at the expense of justice?

Hon Mrs Boyd: I would tell the member opposite that the last intention we have is to in any way lower the public confidence or the actual provision of justice within the province.

More than 87% of the crimes that are processed through the courts of Ontario are what we would call non-violent crimes, crimes that are not against persons. One of the issues for us is that with each of those cases that comes through the court, whether they are in that category or in the category of young offenders actions or in the category of violent crimes, all of those issues have specific case facts.

The way the court acts now often prevents a real look at how those cases will proceed, and it does not include, in many cases, an assessment of how successful the investigation has been, what needs to be added to it.

What we are doing, and it is very much in keeping with what was suggested by Justice Martin and the committee in their initial report last summer, is to look at how we can develop in specific case facts a way of dealing with those issues.

I would say to the member that we have announced diversion projects around things like shoplifting—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Will the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Mrs Boyd: —and around other issues. We have been very, very clear that there are many issues that don't need to go through the full court process if we can find ways in which the community interest is being served more appropriately.

1420

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REFORM

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. There's a certain road that's paved with good intentions, and after your announcement today about the restructuring of our social assistance system, we can see that the road to despair still exists for thousands of Ontario residents who are suffering from poverty, over a million who are on social assistance. Their road is being paved with your refusal to deal with this problem, especially in light of the fact that you campaigned extensively on it in the last election.

You have offered little consolation to these groups with your announcement today, especially those who rely on social assistance. You've offered no new hope for taxpayers who fund and support this extensive system. Your so-called initiatives today are still totally undefined. They don't have the practical objectives that have been referred to in other documents, we have no clear implementation guidelines and we're not sure about anything about when this is actually going to take effect.

It was in February of this year, just as he became minister, that the Premier was musing about some of the initiatives undertaken—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Jackson: —by President Clinton in the United States and the Premier said, "Simply paying people to sit at home is not smart."

My question is simply this: Will you not agree that your document is simply a point of postponement of the real issues of reforming social assistance in this province? Do you agree that the free ride for welfare recipients in this province, as stated by your Premier, should go on for another two years or should action be occurring today?

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): I have to take exception to that last comment the member made in terms of the "free ride"

comment. I believe very sincerely, albeit with the limited experience I have in this portfolio, that the vast majority of people who are on the social assistance system are people who want to work. This reform is aimed at helping them to get back into the workforce. This is not a point of postponement. Far from it. This is a real point of departure for us into some real action.

The member earlier talked about the variety of reports that have been provided to the ministry and to the government in the past, and he's quite right. There has been a lot of good advice that's been provided to us. We have taken a good look at that advice, and as a result of that have come up with this policy of the government.

The policy of the government with respect to the changes to the social assistance system is contained in this document and in the details that will flow from this document, in the legislation that will come before Christmas coming out of this commitment. Therefore, what we are announcing today is a real commitment to action on the part of this government.

Mr Jackson: The reference to the Premier comes from a Toronto Sun article where the Premier clearly stated that radical changes were coming, that they were imminent. Your predecessor said they were pretty imminent. The photo caption says "Bob Rae: A Crackdown." I'm not creating this. This was the language of your own Premier.

My question to you is, if the Premier had this opinion of welfare recipients in this province, why is it then that when you have your announcement today, it won't take effect for two years? Nothing will happen for two years. When asked how much money would be saved, you said you did not know. When asked when accountability measures would be applied, you said, "I don't know."

Minister, Ontario taxpayers want to know the specifics about how, what you're going to perform and change in social assistance in Ontario, when it is going to occur, what kinds of savings they can anticipate and when you'll tackle the real problem of the misallocation and the inappropriate payment and welfare fraud which, according to the Provincial Auditor, represents about 10% of all payments.

Hon Mr Silipo: The member keeps tying the question of misallocation of funds or fraud to the question of, as he perceives it, inaction. Let me be very clear with him. We take the issue of fraud very seriously. We have a number of initiatives that are under way within the system that will help us to get, we believe, at the question of fraud in a more systematic way.

But I believe the member himself would be the first to admit that even if we were able to deal with every instance of fraud in the system, while that would save us some significant dollars, and we are intending to do that, this would not resolve the plight that hundreds of

thousands of people on social assistance are in, which is that they don't have the supports they need in terms of education upgrading, of retraining, of being able to meet the needs of the over 500,000 children who are on the social assistance system, to be able to meet those needs outside of the social assistance system.

The directions that are set out in this document are exactly the directions that we believe are necessary in order to accomplish that and in order to be able, over time, to have fewer people on the social assistance rolls, because that's the way in which you save dollars for the taxpayers of this province and that's the way in which you render dignity to individuals who are now on the social assistance system.

I take no defence in terms of having answered questions honestly and straightforwardly in saying that there are things that we haven't yet worked out—

The Speaker: Could the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Silipo: —and that we intend to work out.

Mr Jackson: The problem is that those sentiments are only referred to in question period. They're not contained in this government's announcement. They weren't at any point raised during the one-hour press conference earlier this morning about the substantive overhaul of Ontario's welfare system.

What's important as well is what's not in the minister's announcement. What's not in the announcement is the whole issue of getting people out of the dehumanizing effect of welfare, and there is no practical encouragement for people to participate with shared responsibility. This is a concept that was developed very clearly in the Transitions document, and there's no reference whatsoever in terms of the government's planning.

The other issue is this issue of accountability to taxpayers: again, no mention, in this government's massive overhaul of our welfare system, of accountability. Then the minister says to us that he's honestly answering questions.

Minister, three weeks ago I raised the issue in this House if you would assist us with getting to the bottom of the question of the illegal refugees, approximately 10,000 of them in the city of Toronto, who are on welfare, and you will not assist the federal government in getting to the bottom of this issue.

You said to this House that you would respond to that question, that you took it seriously and that you'd report back to the House. Why is it, then, that something as simple as that you cannot put in this announcement or you cannot respond to in this House? If you're truly serious about accountability, then answer those questions—

The Speaker: Would the member complete his question, please.

Mr Jackson: —because we're dealing with thou-

sands and millions of taxpayer dollars.

Hon Mr Silipo: I think if the member wishes to re-read the statement that I've given here today and this morning, indeed he will see that there are references there, as there are in the paper itself, to the question of accountability.

I can also say to the member with respect to the information that he passed on to me a few weeks ago that this is being looked at and at an appropriate time I'll be happy to respond to the member more specifically on that.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I want to bring to the attention of the Minister of Health the serious shortage that exists in northern Ontario concerning orthopaedic surgeons.

North Bay is short three orthopaedic surgeons, and I'm told that during the month of August there will not be any orthopaedic coverage for this entire city. Sudbury is short four orthopaedic surgeons. For 27 days over the next two months there will be no orthopaedic surgeon on call, which means that every third day, Sudbury will not have orthopaedic coverage.

Two months ago, your government spent \$110,000 running these newspaper ads which documented the doctor shortage across the province, yet the problem remains. Minister, where do you expect the people of Sudbury and North Bay to go to receive emergency health care when there are no orthopaedic surgeons available to treat them?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I think that's a very troubling question and certainly one that is troubling our ministry and one that has been asked for many years by people in northern Ontario.

Let me say to the member that every effort that we have made, many of which he has criticized and disagreed with, is designed to make sure that we find a lasting solution to this long-standing problem of making sure that all across this province there are the right physicians and the right specialists in the right place so that everyone has access and has equitable access to necessary services.

Mr Jim Wilson: Minister, this is not an isolated physician resource problem. It's a province-wide shortage of orthopaedic surgeons. Because of your failure to deal with this critical shortage of specialists, the problem has reached a boiling point in northern Ontario.

1430

Recently, a 13-year-old Sudbury boy broke his leg. He was taken to the emergency ward at Sudbury General Hospital only to learn that there were no orthopaedic surgeons on call that day. As a result of the shortage of orthopaedic surgeons, he was then taken by air ambulance to the Sick Children's Hospital in

Toronto. The estimated cost of a two-way air ambulance transfer from Sudbury to Toronto is \$3,000.

Minister, your health care system is not providing accessible treatment and it's certainly not cost-effective. Given the circumstances I've outlined to you, how can you expect health care professionals to help you reduce costs when it is clear that you are incapable of effectively managing Ontario's health care system?

Hon Mrs Grier: There is some sort of conclusion and logic in there that I think I totally disagree with. Let me say to the member that I think it is extremely unfortunate when somebody needing emergency service cannot find it at the hospital to which they first go. I'm delighted that in the case he mentions, treatment was provided. I regret that it had to be provided in Toronto.

What I said in my first answer was that this has been a long-standing problem. The management of resources and the ability to make sure that we have the right people in the right place at the right time has not been primarily a question of money. There have been incentives, there have been programs to encourage people to go to northern Ontario, and they have not worked. Even in the last three or four months, when there has been so much attention focused on both new graduates needing positions and underserved areas needing resources, we have had to bring in locums from other jurisdictions because we couldn't get physicians to go to northern Ontario.

There has to be a better way of planning the system. I agree with the member, we haven't found it yet, but I can assure him that the work that is being done in conjunction with the Ontario Medical Association, with the academic health science centres, with the district health councils, is going to provide the basis for a lasting solution to what has been a long-standing problem.

Mr Jim Wilson: Minister, you talk about this problem being years old. I want to quote from Dr Dhiman from Sudbury, who says, "If someone is hurt on a particular day that is left empty"—he's talking about no orthopaedic surgeon on call—"he or she will go to Ottawa, London or Toronto," he said. "The situation isn't new to Sudbury, it's two years old." It kind of corresponds with our Martel affair, wouldn't you say?

Another 13-year-old boy from Sturgeon Falls who broke his arm last week was flown to Ottawa for treatment because there was no orthopaedic surgeon to treat him in North Bay or Sudbury. One Sturgeon Falls doctor said, "I'm concerned our referral area can't even handle a simple problem like that."

In Sudbury, for example, you can expect on average three bone fractures per day. At a round-trip air ambulance cost to Toronto of \$3,000, multiplied over 27 days when there won't be any orthopaedic surgeons, the cost

to the taxpayers is an additional \$243,000 in Sudbury alone. That's a quarter of a million dollars for three broken legs. This is NDP health care management.

Minister, instead of bashing doctors to the detriment of patient needs, will you start working with all health care professionals to ensure that money is saved and that the people of northern Ontario receive the health care they deserve and need?

Hon Mrs Grier: Let me make the point to the member again. It is not for lack of money that there are not orthopaedic surgeons in Sudbury. Sudbury has been on the underserved list for orthopaedic surgeons for far longer than the last two years. They have not been able to attract orthopaedic surgeons to Sudbury for whatever reason. I think it's a very nice place to live. I think it has wonderful facilities. It obviously has a need for orthopaedic surgeons, but we have never in this province had the ability to require orthopaedic surgeons to go to Sudbury, nor, let me say, do I think that might be the appropriate way to get there. We have very much a free market system with respect to specialists.

I hope that by having, for the first time, some plans and some involvement from the district health councils in determining what the needs are and also in working with the academic health scientists to make sure that we train and graduate the specialists that are needed for the 1990s and into the next century, we will come to a situation where this does not become a recurring question and a recurring problem every time there is an unfortunate incident in Sudbury or other parts of northern Ontario.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): I do have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Minister, I wanted to address the issue of the interim casino, as you no doubt predicted you may receive a question on that today.

Minister, from the outset, we on this side of the House have said that the casino project has been fraught with mismanagement and uncertainty, lack of proper consultation, and now we find a lack—and I say this with the greatest respect—of integrity in terms of the process that you set out at the start.

I asked you a question a few weeks ago and I asked you how you could justify and rationalize the way you were handling, right from the outset, the development of the interim project. You said, "Trust us." Effectively, you said to the people who are out there: "Trust us. We'll handle this appropriately, and even though we changed all the rules for the tendering process, bear with us. We'll come clean on this one this time."

Minister, there's an article in the *Globe and Mail* today, and you know about it, and I received phone calls on this yesterday. The Minister of Education and Training, the member for Windsor-Riverside, made a

decision. He made the decision and effectively dictated to you, the minister supposedly in charge, that it would be at the art gallery.

There are people who have put a lot of money on this, invested in it—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the member have a question?

Mr McClelland: Minister, I want you to tell the people of Ontario and the people who have invested in this project how they can have any sense of confidence that this process will continue with integrity and without the political interference of the worst and most crass kind that has been demonstrated by the involvement of the Minister of Education, the member for Windsor-Riverside.

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): We have been very clear and forthright and upfront about this whole process from the beginning. The honourable member is very aware that from the beginning of the initiative, this government has been very sensitive to the Windsor community. In keeping with the spirit of that commitment, of that partnership with the Windsor community, we decided to put the interim casino downtown. Once the request for proposals was out there for the selection of a site, the city council passed a resolution in the middle of that process. There was a demonstration of over 600 people, business people from downtown. We received many letters from the community, making it very clear that they wanted the interim casino downtown. In the spirit of cooperation with the community, we decided to make what I believe to be a sound business decision to put that casino where the people of Windsor want it to be.

Mr McClelland: Minister, you have in the most incredible fashion taken the euphemism of "community sensitivity" and translated that for crass political and I say inappropriate interference by the Minister of Education. The fact of the matter remains that the decision was made prior to the opening of the documents, and you tell me that that was in response to community sentiment expressed. The community sentiment was clearly that of the Minister of Education and he called the shots. If I were you, I would be embarrassed that you didn't even have a management role in making that decision.

1440

Minister, there are people who have put a lot of money into it. You know that. The other two organizations are asking about compensation. In some cases, as much as \$200,000 was invested in preparing the documentation for the interim site, and that was all for naught when your Minister of Education made his decision. There were nine other groups involved, \$30,000 minimum on the table to get into the process, plus hundreds of thousands of dollars in developing it.

They have no confidence whatsoever that there will be any integrity. How can you even ask them to go ahead with this process right now, those who have put their money on the line and invested, when it's seen very evidently and plainly that you are prepared to make political decisions to interfere with tendering in a business process? You have politically interfered and compromised the integrity of the tender process. How are you going to answer to those other nine groups that are out there now?

Hon Ms Churley: This was not a tendering process. It was an RFP, request for proposals. The government reserves the right to pull out of any RFPs that it has issued.

I don't know at this point how much money the three short listed spent, but I do know that Management Board has offered to sit down with them and discuss that. I don't know if that \$200,000 figure is correct, but that will be discussed with them.

I do want to make it clear that there are three members from Windsor in this House, all of whom, quite frankly, yes, made it known to me, all three of them, that the majority of the community of Windsor would like to see the interim casino downtown. I heard from the mayor of Windsor. A unanimous decision was made by city council in Windsor to put the interim casino downtown.

If it were a perfect world, city council would have made that decision early on. Nobody was sure in the beginning of the process, but some time after we issued the RFP, it became very clear that the citizens, the city council of Windsor and the business community wanted that interim casino downtown. It is as simple as that.

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): On the same issue, to the same minister, your assistant deputy minister is quoted today as saying, "It's regrettable it had to happen....These things are not done lightly and one can appreciate why [the losing bidders] are seething. But what I would say to them is: 'Take comfort in the fact that it has never happened before'"—well, he can certainly say that—"and it's very likely never going to happen again."

Why did you put the proponents that made proposals through this charade of a process if you knew in the end you were going to make a political decision anyway? Why did you go through this charade?

Hon Ms Churley: That question relates very specifically to the issue of the RFP, and I believe the appropriate person to answer that is the Chair of Management Board.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): There are two parts of the member's question that have to be addressed, and addressed very clearly. First of all, the decision was not made before the request for proposals went out. That has to be

very clear.

Secondly, as my colleague has already indicated, when a request for proposals goes out like the one that went out, right in the request the government reserves the right to withdraw the proposal, which was done. It's part of the process.

Mr Eves: According to a letter that's now been sent out to the unsuccessful proponents, the government will now apparently consider reasonable compensation for expenses incurred while preparing their proposals. How that translates to me is that the taxpayers of Ontario are now going to be asked to pay in excess of \$200,000 to cover up this political decision, to compensate for this political mistake.

How can you justify the taxpayers of the province paying for this because you've decided to politically intervene after the proposals went out, to quote you?

Hon Mr Charlton: The member opposite is confusing two parts of the process here. The letter he refers to is the letter which I sent to the three short-listed companies that came through the RFP and that may have spent money on the second phase of this proposal, which would have been the tender process if it had not been cancelled.

The companies that were referred to in the first member opposite's question, which participated in the request for proposals, are not going to be compensated. The conditions under which they make those proposals under the request are very clear; they were set out clearly in the original request for proposals.

EVICCTIONS

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): My question is to the Attorney General. On June 3, Bill 20 was debated and subsequently referred to the standing committee on administration of justice. At that time the member for Leeds-Grenville attempted to convince the members of this Legislature, and since that time constituents in the ridings of those government members who voted against this bill, that no such legislation existed and, therefore, this legislation was necessary.

During the debate members of our government attempted to point out that there exists in the Landlord and Tenant Act a section that serves the purpose of this bill.

Minister, my question is simply, what is the legislation as it exists in the Landlord and Tenant Act in regard to the eviction of individuals convicted of criminal offences?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I thank the member for the question and for the opportunity to outline the steps that are currently available under the landlord-tenant act to evict persons who are conducting illegal activities in a rental unit.

The section that the member refers to is section 107 of the landlord-tenant act. It provides that a landlord can

take eviction proceedings if there is an illegal act going on in the rental unit. In the case of an allegation of an illegal act, on 20 days' notice a landlord can bring that matter to the court of competent jurisdiction and can seek a termination order and also a writ of possession.

Part IV of the landlord-tenant act provides access to summary proceedings for landlords or tenants. So on a case-by-case basis, on the strength of the evidence provided either by the tenant or by the landlord in the particular case, the judge in the court of competent jurisdiction can arrive at a decision.

Unlike what is contemplated in Bill 20, which may actually slow down the process, this provision of the act provides that a landlord, upon becoming aware of an illegal act, can move well before a criminal conviction is registered, so the process can be much quicker for both the landlord and the tenant.

Mr Cooper: Once again, what has happened is that during the debate the member for Leeds-Grenville said near the end, "There may be some problems in terms of this legislation, I freely admit, but this exercise is to approve of the principle."

My understanding in this House is that if you want to do something in principle, you bring in a resolution on Thursday mornings rather than a bill. Being that it has been referred to committee, what has been suggested by the member for Leeds-Grenville in the letter he wrote to my newspaper and also to the newspaper of the member for Cochrane North, calling into question the integrity of the constituents in electing us as their representatives—wouldn't you say that the member, in your opinion, could be accused of political grandstanding and wasting the time of the House and the committees?

Hon Mrs Boyd: I certainly would not impute any motive to any member of this House, but I would answer the question by saying that members on this side of the House are just as concerned as the member for Leeds-Grenville about the need for us to help control the distribution and use of illegal drugs and to ensure that that is not something that proliferates in rental accommodation.

1450

But the problem with his bill as it stands is that it may well punish others who don't have direct involvement with illegal activities. His bill does not pay any heed to the manner in which drug dealers or others exploit vulnerable women and their children. If a tenancy were to be terminated, they would be thrown out of their homes, and they are certainly not involved in the activities.

It also begs a question of equity, because persons who are found guilty of wife assault or murder or sexual assault or a host of other heinous crimes would not be subject to the kind of sanction that he suggests.

NURSING HOMES

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): My question is to the Minister of Health. On July 1, with 30 days' notice, the Minister of Health increased fees for nursing home residents by up to \$4,380 each year, and \$4,380 is the increase in cost for accommodation, not the whole cost that many residents have to bear. That increase is 32%. All other landlords in Ontario are restricted to an increase of 4.9% this year. All other landlords in Ontario are required to give 90 days' written notice of an increase. The Minister of Health gave 30 days' notice, and she didn't even send the notice directly to those who are affected.

My question to the Minister of Health is, will you rescind this 32% increase and reduce it to the 4.9% increase which every other landlord in Ontario is not allowed to exceed?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm sure the member is well aware that nursing homes and homes for the aged and homes for long-term care are not covered by the Landlord and Tenant Act or the Rent Control Act. That, I think, is her point: They are quite different from that kind of rental accommodation.

With respect to the question of notice, again the issue of how to equalize the fees that are paid by occupants of accommodation in such facilities has been under discussion for a very long time. The member was part of the debate around Bill 101, at which point it was well known that upon passage of that legislation what would be put in place would be a standard accommodation fee, as opposed to the very real discrepancies that have existed up to now, where some people have been paying \$26 a day and some people have been paying \$90 a day.

Mrs Sullivan: The minister is correct: She is not covered by the Landlord and Tenant Act as it applies to residents of nursing homes. None the less, just as an independent landlord would be, she is responsible for making the determination of the fees which will be paid by residents in those nursing homes.

Of the \$647 million that the Minister of Health has said will be committed to long-term care in additional funds, \$150 million will be taken from residents of nursing homes themselves. The share that the government will commit—\$497 million—will not be put into place until 1997.

I am asking the Minister of Health if she will change her approach to ensure that the patients' share of the increases will also be phased in and that their full \$150 million in additional charges, which she's requiring nursing home residents to pay, does not hit them all at once but is phased in over the same four years that she will allow herself.

Hon Mrs Grier: The kinds of changes that the member is requesting, I can't remember whether or not

they were part of any amendments that she or the official opposition made when we were discussing the legislation—

Mrs Sullivan: No, regulation, Ruth.

Hon Mrs Grier: —but certainly I appreciated the support of the member when we adopted that legislation here in this House. The basis of that legislation was a standard accommodation fee across the board for accommodation.

Mrs Sullivan: It was all regulations.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Halton Centre.

Hon Mrs Grier: Let me also remind the member of the major change that we made, which was that, in determining ability to pay under our legislation, only the occupant's income is taken into account as opposed to the legislation in the situation that existed beforehand, when people were very frightened that their assets might have to be sold in order to pay for their accommodation charges.

TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): My question's for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and it concerns the devastating impact this government's social contract legislation will have on municipalities across Ontario.

Municipalities recognize and accept the need to reduce the cost to present and future taxpayers in this province, but the same municipal governments have already seen their transfer payments slashed substantially. They have already trimmed their budgets and they're already operating with minimal staff. You've already negotiated and they have already negotiated days off.

Ontario's municipal governments have already undertaken cost-reduction measures. Would the minister, who chose to ignore the proactive approach the municipalities have taken during budget deliberations, outline exactly what additional cost-cutting measures he expects the municipalities to take when they have already cut to the bone?

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): We recognize that a good many of the municipalities have in fact been trying to find ways, as we have as a government, to cut the costs and overhead of government. Indeed, I've met with many of them and some of the ways they've been doing this have been innovative. I think they deserve a lot of credit for doing so.

At the same time, I think they recognize, when I talk to them one by one, that there's only one taxpayer and that we cannot have a deficit that will rise to where we're paying 26 cents in interest to foreign banks and pension plans and that they have to be part of the solution. They're willing to be part of that solution and are looking at various ways of saving costs. A number of them have come to me with some proposals, some of

which they brought to the sectoral table, that we concur would be of benefit to their taxpayers and our taxpayers, who of course are all the same taxpayer.

Mr McLean: You did not answer my question. The municipalities are wanting to know what further cuts you're anticipating they will have to make since they indicate they have already cut their budgets to the bone. They have laid off staff in some cases. They have given days off without pay. What you're telling them you want them to do in the social contract has all been done. You're also saying to them now, "We want you to cut further."

The question I have is, how can they cut further and where do you anticipate they should cut further? Do you want them all to be in trouble? As far as we can gather, you're looking at it. You said you've met with the clerks; you said they agreed with them. You said you've met with AMO; you said they agreed with what you're doing. But the municipalities have that question out there, and they want to know what you would advise them to do before they leave town and the last one will be able to turn out the lights.

Hon Mr Philip: Nobody's leaving town. This province at the present time, with 33% of the population, is getting almost 60% of all foreign investment. They're coming into town, not leaving town, as the Conservatives with their doom and gloom would have us paint the province.

In terms of the municipalities, you see a similar doom and gloom. What the member is saying is that the municipal councils cannot find any other ways of reducing costs. I don't buy that, the municipal councils don't buy it and the ratepayers don't buy it either. They're asking the municipalities to sit down with their employees, get back to the sectoral table and in fact have their allotment reduced in so doing. That's what we're hoping they will in fact do.

LANDFILL

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): My question is to the Minister of Environment and Energy. The other day I read with interest an article that appeared in the *Globe and Mail*—I am starting to sound like Noble Villeneuve—

Interjection.

Mr Wiseman: —that was not included on the list of potential landfill sites. It said the owners of the land are pressing to have it included as a potential site for Metro and York garbage. The minister knows this site is not in my constituency, but the people in my riding were disturbed because they feel this article implied that the Interim Waste Authority was considering using this site and that it is prepared to relax some of its criteria in order to accommodate the land owners.

My constituents are concerned that, if the IWA does this for Superior-Crawford and Metro Toronto, sites

might come on the list in Durham if the criteria were relaxed there. They want to feel confident that the rules are the same for all the players. My question to the minister is this: Is the Interim Waste Authority undertaking negotiations with any land owners in any of the three site search areas and relaxing its criteria in order to make a particular site work?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): I thank the member for his question. It's a most important one and I'd like to confirm for him that the Interim Waste Authority is not undertaking or carrying out negotiations with any land owner who is a proponent for a landfill site in these areas, and it is certainly not relaxing its criteria in order to make some site "work."

Mr Wiseman: Another important issue in the same article had to do with the ownership of the sites and the revenues generated from them. The article said that it had always been the province's plan to turn the ownership of the sites and therefore the revenue generated over to the municipalities. This was a surprise to me when I read the article. Can the minister shed some light on this issue? Has this always been the plan?

Hon Mr Wildman: I would not want to question the sources of the Globe and Mail but there certainly has not been any decision made one way or the other as to the possible ownership and control or management of any of the sites once they have been assessed by the environmental assessment and any decision is made. There have been some very preliminary discussions between myself and the chairs of the regional governments about what might be done and in those discussions, it was clear that no decision has been made. As a matter of fact, we're open for suggestions.

1500

TRUCKING INDUSTRY

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): I have here a letter to the member for Norfolk and it is—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): To whom is your question directed?

Mr Daigeler: The question is addressed to the Minister of Transportation. This letter to the member for Norfolk is from a trucking company in his riding, and I'm not sure why the member for Norfolk did not raise this question, since it concerns jobs and businesses in his area. Be that as it may, here's what the letter says:

"For quite some time now, we in the trucking industry keep hearing legislation will happen any day. That was months ago. In our own particular company, we were recently awarded a major contract, to which 53-foot trailers were a must to secure the contract. Upon the good news, we ordered 40 of these trailers at an investment of \$800,000, plus applicable taxes, and more importantly, jobs."

The letter goes on to say, "Should this bill not pass

in the next several days, we will be forced to withdraw from our contract, and I can assure you that many other Ontario carriers are in the same position."

Minister, why are you forcing this Tillsonburg trucking company to cancel this contract, and why are you forcing the Tillsonburg people to lose these jobs?

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): There are different sorts of analogies, of the way people look at the world in the future as they go to a crystal ball. There are those who say that gloom and doom will prevail, that the cup is always half full. The same people will say, by way of attitude, that it cannot be done.

I say to the people of Tillsonburg, I say to the people who have their lives at stake, in terms of configuration, I ask them to have faith, because the member has specifically focused on the future. If I were a gambling person, if I believed in games of chance, I would have no fear. I would look to the future, near-term, with a great deal of confidence, because trucking is alive and well and trucking will well be made more competitive indeed. Tell your friends to hang on. You have that responsibility. Tell them that their place under the sun will be near them very soon.

Mr Daigeler: This answer really, truly makes me angry, because we're talking about jobs here. We are talking, as the minister just said himself, about the lives of people in Ontario. This is not a matter for fancy rhetoric, not a matter for fancy announcements. This is a matter for action, minister.

You have been giving this answer, that a decision is pending, for the last two years. Minister, you should act now. The people's lives are at stake, as you said yourself just now, this minute. Why are you not acting?

Hon Mr Pouliot: With respect, this is cheap theatre. Thank God, it's free. The member is trying to find passion within his soul. Let's deal with the reality. There is such a thing as process. A few more days, a few more weeks of consultation, a little more lobbying and we will get there.

Yes, I'm concerned with configuration, very much aware that it's \$100 million of business, the need to address the permit issue, the need to have people at the factory level producing those trucks. We're sympathetic, we're working towards it and we're very much aware of competitiveness in the marketplace. I don't wish to remind the members that those people—because with those people, you always pay but there is no action—sat there for five years and four months, procrastinating but doing nothing. We're doing something in less than three years.

TIRE TAX

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a question for the Minister of Environment and Energy. Mr Minister, when you were in opposition and when the Pro-

gressive Conservatives were in opposition against the Liberal government, both of our parties were very strongly against the Liberal tire tax. We felt that was a tax grab for their wild spending, and you of course, about three years later, withdrew that tax, although it took you all that time. Will you confirm that revenues raised from this tax since your government came to power were used for funding the tire recycling programs and research?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): I don't have all the figures on hand, but I can indicate to you that approximately \$30 million to \$35 million a year were collected from the tire tax and about \$16 million a year were spent—I think, now—on projects for recycling of rubber, crumbing rubber and so on, and new technologies for reusing rubber. What the industry said is quite true, that the whole amount was not used for recycling and for new technologies related to rubber. The revenues, of course, went to the consolidated revenue fund and were used throughout our whole program on the 3Rs.

Mr Tilson: As you know, I asked an order paper question on this very issue, and unless I misinterpreted the answer to your question, my interpretation of your answer was that about 20% of the moneys, the revenue that was collected from this tire tax, was used for that process and the rest of it—

Hon Mr Wildman: Almost half.

Mr Tilson: Well, that's what the order paper question said. The rest of it, which was about \$180 million, went into the consolidated revenue fund. This is from the beginning of when you came into power till now.

My question is, now are you prepared to redirect the remaining moneys that were collected by not only the Liberals but even by your government alone into tire recycling programs and research, as opposed to going into the consolidated revenue fund, which it wasn't designed for in the first place?

Hon Mr Wildman: The member knows full well that this was the basis of our opposition, as of his party's opposition, to the implementation of the tire tax in the very beginning. I'm happy to say that there was significant investment in new technologies, which will continue, and we will continue to make those investments in new technologies for the recycling of rubber products, particularly tires, in this province.

I had the opportunity to participate with my colleague from Cambridge in the opening of a plant there that has developed new technologies that are being marketed in other parts of the world: in Italy, in Mexico and also perhaps in Spain. So there has been progress made, but I agree with the member that those revenues were never intended, as they were said to be by the Liberals, to go specifically to a particular program. They were going

into the consolidated revenue fund, as all tax revenues go into the consolidated revenue fund. It's for that reason that we decided to continue our investments in recycling of rubber products but to withdraw that tax, because it wasn't dedicated to one particular purpose.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Pursuant to standing order 34(a), the member for Eglinton has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Minister of Education and Training concerning Jobs Ontario Training. This matter will be debated today at 6 pm.

PETITIONS

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): A petition to the members of the Legislative Assembly, Ontario, re Bill 38, an amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act to permit wide-open Sunday shopping and eliminate Sunday as a legal holiday:

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38. We believe that this bill defies God's laws, violates the principle of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection for workers regarding when they must work and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province.

"The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man, but dates from God's creation and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all people, both physically and spiritually.

"We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

It's signed by 116 constituents, and I affix my signature.

1510

AMALGAMATION OF HOUSING AUTHORITIES

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a petition with 251 signatures from my riding of Dufferin-Peel, mainly from the towns of Shelburne, Grand Valley and Orangeville. It's addressed to the Legislature of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Housing Corp has announced its intention to consider the amalgamation of the Dufferin County Housing Authority with the Wellington and Guelph Housing Authority; and

"Whereas we are in strong opposition to any amalgamation involving the Dufferin County Housing Authority;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

"To direct the Ontario Housing Corp to abandon any consideration of amalgamation of the Dufferin County Housing Authority with the Wellington and Guelph Housing Authority."

I have signed my name to this petition.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): I have a petition here signed by approximately 600 people from Woodslee, Belle River, La Salle, Essex and Tilbury in my riding, to the members of provincial Parliament:

"We, the undersigned, hereby register our opposition in the strongest of terms to the proposed amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"We believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for quality of life, religious freedom and for family time. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter from the definition of 'legal holiday' and classify them as working days should be defeated."

I have attached my signature.

PETS IN CONDOMINIUMS

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I have a petition addressed to the Parliament of Ontario relating to an absolute prohibition against pets in many condominiums. It's signed by hundreds of people from my riding and neighbouring communities, and calls on the Parliament to amend the Condominium Act or any proposed changes to it, to allow the keeping of pets in condominiums to be subject to the approval of a majority of unit owners.

I have put my signature to it.

GAMBLING

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): I have a petition from parishioners from the Burlington Baptist Church on New Street in Burlington. It's to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing

video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

That has my signature of support, as well as quite a few constituents and parishioners from Burlington Baptist Church.

HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition from Dr Norman Munnoch who resides in my riding. It says:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under government expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

There are approximately 150 to 160 signatures on the petition.

Mr D. James Henderson (Etobicoke-Humber): I have a very fine petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which says:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

That petition is signed by a couple of hundred constituents and very happily by me as well.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition from approximately 400 residents of my riding.

"We, the undersigned, hereby register our opposition

to wide-open Sunday shopping.

"We believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for quality of life, religious freedom and for family time. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on retailers, retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I have affixed my signature.

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I have a petition here from hundreds of people from my riding against Bill 38 and against the flip-flop of the New Democratic Party government, a petition to the members of the provincial Parliament.

"We, the undersigned, hereby register our opposition in the strongest terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sundays from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"We believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I'm very happy to affix my signature and join with these hundreds of people who object to the New Democratic bill.

Mr David Winninger (London South): I too have a petition signed by hundreds of individuals registering their opposition to Bill 38 in the same language expressed in the petition just read by the member for Victoria-Haliburton.

GAMBLING

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario opposing the legalizing of gambling and calling on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, "That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos." It has a number of "whereas" clauses, including, for example:

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity," and a number of others.

I'm pleased to sign my signature in support and indicate that I voted against this bill.

GO BUS SERVICE

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a petition of 233 signatures from my riding of Dufferin-Peel, mainly from the towns of Bolton and Palgrave. It's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To object to the recent cuts to GO Transit bus service for Woodbridge, Kleinburg, Nobleton, Bolton, Palgrave and Highway 9;

"Whereas this will be a major inconvenience to non-drivers; and

"Whereas it will have a negative impact on the local economy; and

"Whereas the lack of transit services will increase traffic, thereby increasing air pollution levels at a time when all levels of government are making efforts to reduce pollution and encourage public transit systems; and

"Whereas the cuts leave no alternative means of commuting in and out of Toronto during peak hours; and

"Whereas the lack of GO buses will force passengers in one of the worst economic times in Ontario history to incur extra expense in finding another form of transportation;

"It is resolved that the government of Ontario overturn GO Transit's decision and restore GO Transit service to Bolton and Palgrave."

I have signed this petition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): I have a petition signed by about 73 people from North Simcoe, Simcoe, Hamilton, Moulton etc. It's to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

1520

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's

expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will enable the government to unilaterally and arbitrarily restrict payments for psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality mental health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw the proposal to restrict payments for psychotherapy and withdraw the proposal to allow the cabinet to make decisions with respect to the number of times patients may receive particular insured services and set maximums with respect thereto. The government of Ontario must reaffirm its commitment to the process of joint management and rational reform of the delivery of medical services in the province as specified under the OMA/government framework agreement."

Mr Speaker, I've affixed my signature to this petition, concur with it and present it to you.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a petition of 42 signatures from around my riding of Dufferin-Peel. It's a petition to the members of the provincial Parliament. It's with respect to the amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act proposing wide-open Sunday shopping.

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition to wide-open Sunday shopping.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for quality of life, religious freedom and for family time. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

Mr Speaker, I have supported this resolution and I have signed it, as I have voted against the bill on second reading.

HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): I have a petition that's signed by approximately 100 people in my riding, but it is in addition to the 1,600-plus that I presented a couple of weeks ago. It says:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, request that Ridgetown and the surrounding district be recognized as an area of the

province which has a shortage of family physicians. Specifically, we require exemption from the following aspects of the Ministry of Health expenditure control plan:

"The plan to withdraw older physicians from practice. This could result in the loss of three of the four doctors in our community who serve over 10,000 people.

"The plan to reduce fees for the new physicians by 75% for the first five years of practice. This will force the two doctors who are planning to start practising in our community in 1994 to leave the province.

"The plan to reduce payments to general practitioners who provide services above a certain threshold. This restriction will discourage the only physician who would be left in our community if the above aspects of the expenditure control plan are imposed on our community."

GAMBLING

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have another petition here opposing casino gambling. It's signed by such people as Olive Huntley, Dorothy Royles and Beatrice Howe, who live in the Ingersoll area, and some people from the Thamesford area as well.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES ALLOCATIONS DE RETRAITE DES DÉPUTÉS À L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

On motion by Mrs Sullivan, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 73, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les allocations de retraite des députés à l'Assemblée législative.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): Yes. The bill that I'm presenting is one that I hope will be considered in the discussion of the retirement allowances act. It provides that members retiring after the commencement of the 36th Legislature would not be entitled to a pension unless they'd contributed five years of service over two or more consecutive legislatures by providing that such members could not begin collecting the pension before attaining 55 years of age and that spousal benefits would commence at age 55 unless the surviving family were simply a child or children.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS), 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (POMPIERS AUXILIAIRES)

Bill 87, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act

with respect to Volunteer Firefighters / Loi modifiant le Code de la route relativement aux pompiers auxiliaires.

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I move that the order for third reading of Bill 87, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to Volunteer Firefighters, be discharged and the bill be referred to the committee of the whole House.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

ONTARIO LOAN ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LES EMPRUNTS DE L'ONTARIO

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 25, An Act to authorize borrowing on the credit of the Consolidated Revenue Fund / Loi autorisant des emprunts garantis par le Trésor.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): I believe the member for Markham had the floor.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): I want to carry on in the whole vein of our presentation as a caucus, that running government should be much the same as you run a business. If you were to have that sense of the way you run the affairs of the people of the province of Ontario, then you'd be cognizant of business practices: You're not in a position to borrow more money than you can pay back.

Business today is going through a tremendous readjustment as every business tries to become more cognizant of its own real terms of dealing with the economy. They know they can't afford any fat in the system. They know that old systems have to be looked at and revisited and renewed, that in business, in order to stay alive and stay competitive, one has to continually review and open up the old ways of doing things with a fresh look and a fresh set of eyes.

We in the province of Ontario continue in the same old ways. We continue to borrow. We continue to spend. We continue to hire. We continue to grow. We continue to do all things in the way they were done several years ago. It's time we put a stop to the constant spending of government money. It belongs to the people, and we need to put government into the same kind of box that business is in so that government becomes more accountable to the people. The politicians are accountable every four or five years, but it would appear that the bureaucracy and the spending carries on without interruption.

When we today are looking at the government coming forward requesting another issuance of money, some \$17 billion, does it surprise you that the public at large would be concerned about this? I think we all have to be concerned, because for government to continue as we are is to bankrupt future generations.

It is a deficit we're creating. We're already living with a deficit of around \$10 billion. "Deficit" is only a

word for deferred taxes, only a way of taking the spending of today and putting it on future generations, and for us to do that is irresponsible. It's irresponsible for us to continue to spend, spend, and tax and spend. There has to be a renewal of government, and that had a lot to do with the recommendations our caucus presented during the debate on Bill 48.

We presented a series of amendments, none of which were accepted by this government, that would have caused this government to review in an objective way how the money is being spent on programs and on services, to see if there is any way those programs could be sunsetted so that we just wouldn't continue without interruption.

1530

So we are here today one more time, kicking the cat, making a point heard but maybe not understood, because there is no sense in my mind that the New Democrats need to listen to anyone. Even yesterday when the government was threatened, according to the media—I think most of us on this side of the House knew that the government wasn't really in jeopardy of losing the vote on Bill 48, that the government had the numbers. If the government didn't have the numbers yesterday, then there would have been some sense in which this government would have listened to the opposition.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): A big if.

Mr Cousens: Oh, it's a big if. I realize that.

They knew that the Conservatives were ready to work with the government to achieve the reduction of \$2 billion in spending on salaries in the broader public service. We were prepared to do that, we were committed to do that, and in order to do it, we wanted to make some meaningful amendments to the very poorly drafted bill for the social contract.

It illustrated the way in which the government can do what it wants, when it wants, how it wants, without any regard to what anyone else has to say. It also was a day of reckoning when everyone saw that this government doesn't listen to anyone. It has to do with now they've got the power. Mr Rae and Mr Laughren and his cabinet have the control of the purse-strings of the province, and even though the visitors' gallery was filled with a lot of their former friends, the heads of the various unions that make up the different sectors of the province of Ontario, even though they were here in the House, the government arbitrarily, unilaterally and without consideration of their views proceeded to enact a bill that's going to have very serious ramifications in the province.

I want to make one point that underlies my major concern about the debt and the increasing debt of the province through this bill. Even though the government has addressed the spending of government by removing

some \$2.4 billion from the expenditures of the province and even though the province has taken \$2 billion, as it will through the social contract—there's \$4.4 billion saved—and even though the government is going to tax us to the tune of another \$2 billion a year—that becomes \$6 billion more that the government has, \$6.4 billion, \$6.5 billion—do you realize that the government will spend, in 1993-94, \$160 million more than it did last year? They are still spending more because they have not put the lid on other parts of government spending.

The government just continues to allow the housing boom to go on and on. It's going to cost us \$1.5 billion by 1995, when we start to pay for the way in which they're building houses and affordable homes for people, because they're spending more money on that than they could get away with if they gave people who need housing some support payments. Instead, we're going into the housing business. Even to maintain those units that the government is building is going to be a huge, long-term operating cost for the people of Ontario.

Even though the government has heard that 10% of the social assistance budget is being wasted—the Provincial Auditor, who should know because he's looked at the books, says that 10% of the total cost that's going out to social assistance is wasted. There's fraud; there are problems. Look at it and you can save 10% of it, and 10% of the social assistance budget for the province of Ontario amounts to \$620 million. What does this government do about it? They don't take the time to look at it. I don't think they know how to be accountable for the kinds of problems they're creating.

We look at the fraud that's going on with health cards. The honourable member for Simcoe West, Jim Wilson, has done an outstanding job for our party and I'm most grateful to him for the way in which he has come to the Minister of Health and tried to recommend other ways in which we could address health card fraud. Here is another in excess of \$600 million that could be saved by the province of Ontario.

My point is that if this government were to look at that \$600 million and another \$600 million that we could save in social assistance and another \$1.5 billion that could be saved from other areas that have been suggested by members of the social contract negotiations, you know, you're up to over \$2.5 billion.

You come along and you say, why does the government go ahead and build the new unemployment insurance building in downtown Toronto? There is an actual deed that this government is doing. We're borrowing money to build another structure in downtown Toronto when there are all kinds of empty spaces around. We know that the government will be downsized over the next number of years. All the more reason then; don't borrow money on that.

We're borrowing money to build a new unemployment insurance building in downtown Toronto. That is ludicrous. We shouldn't be doing it. I mean, any person who would do that has to be out of his skull. Well, you guys are out of your skulls, that's really what I'm trying to tell you, because the moment that you come along and start spending money on things like that, you have lost sight of the balance that should be going on within government: balancing priorities, balancing the books, balancing what you're doing with what you have to do and what you can sort of put off till tomorrow.

There aren't any of us in this House, who have our own personal finances that we have to watch—we can't go out and say, "Oh, I'm going to borrow more to do this, I'm going to borrow more to do that," because the debt load then starts taking over our total income. We lose control of our budgets, the banks take us over. Because governments don't go bankrupt; we can tax, but individuals wouldn't be as dumb as government is in continuing to expand this horizon of government.

How embarrassing it is when in fact there are only 21 of us in the PC caucus and though we try every day, though we are diligent in trying to bring to the attention of the government the importance and the urgency of dealing with these issues, the frustration that we feel at the failure that we have in not persuading the Treasurer, the Premier or the caucus of the New Democrats to react and respond to the genuine needs of the province of Ontario is in itself one of the greatest problems we have to carry. It's the kind of thing that we know that the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus could do better, would do better and is committed to doing a much better job than this government is doing and the previous Liberal government did for five years before it.

I tell you, as we've gone along as a caucus, we have delineated and defined our position. There is no other group that has done it as well as we have. We've put a stake in the ground and said: "Here is what we stand for. This is what we believe. This is what we are going to do." We have had several books that we have put out, and we are prepared to continue to do that because I think we owe it to the public to tell them before they elect us what we're going to do, rather than get elected and then change our minds. I mean, that's the hypocrisy of the Liberal Party and the New Democrats.

Mr Mammoliti: Go talk to Kim.

Mr Cousens: Talk about hypocrisy. Now, that's what you really want to talk about. Talk about Bob Rae and his hypocritical position—

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Markham will please address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr Cousens: Mr Speaker, I realize that you're sitting there but, you know, when these honourable members of the New Democratic caucus are in the process of responding to what I'm saying, I can't help

but go and talk to them. I appreciate the fact that they are paying some attention. I suppose it's one thing to listen, but it's another thing to understand.

Our caucus put out, just after the budget came through—we got on a little bus and we couldn't even all fit in it, but we went out and we took the bus. We took it to Brockville and Leeds-Grenville, we took it up to Markham and Richmond Hill, we took it up north to Sudbury and the Sault and we talked to thousands of people. We got them to give us their thoughts of what the budget meant to them and about the taxation level of the province of Ontario, and they came back and helped us define our prosperity agenda for the province of Ontario. I want to put on the record what that agenda is.

1540

The first principle—and I'm proud to say that this has been clearly enunciated by our leader, Mr Mike Harris, who after the next election will be called the Honourable Mike Harris, the first minister of the province of Ontario, and I hope to be one of those sitting near him as he is leading this province—one of the principles we have clearly stated in our booklet, Ontario...Ours to Recover, is that higher taxes are no longer an option. I just want to read into this presentation today these five points, and it really doesn't take a long time.

The first one is, higher taxes are no longer an option. We have reached the point where higher taxes will kill jobs, kill investment and stall Ontario's economic recovery. The way to get more revenue from income tax is to have more people working. The way to generate more revenue from corporate tax is to have more profitable corporations. The way to get more sales tax is to have more people buying. So higher taxes have ceased to be an option.

When you understand the level of taxation, you've got the federal level, you've got the provincial, the regional, municipal, school taxes and only one little person to pay all those taxes. Is it any wonder that we've reached the tax wall and that, as a society, we must address the dysfunction that is part of this heresy in overspending and overtaxing?

The second point we make is, spending cuts are the key to deficit reduction. I repeat, spending cuts are the key to deficit reduction. Independent studies show that every new dollar in taxes translates into only 75 cents in deficit reduction because of the dampening effect on economic activity, while every dollar in spending cuts nets \$1.25 in deficit reduction because of lower borrowing costs. The real principle is, reduce government spending. Don't raise taxes, reduce spending, and then there will be more money to go around. The multiplier factor is visible very, very quickly.

The third point we make in our statement of principles for the prosperity agenda of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party is, the fiscal deficit contributes

to the human deficit. We say that left unchecked, interest payments will soon become Ontario's biggest program expenditure, eating into the very health, education and social assistance programs which enable Ontarians to reach their human and economic potential. There it is, part of our statement and what we believe, knowing that you can't continue to build this deficit.

The deficit has to stop. There has to be a hold placed on government spending. When that is done, we put a hold on expectations so that when people, as painful as it might be, may want more services, more support, more of something, we as a government are going to say: "We've got to reduce the deficit. There is going to be a hold."

Now, when there are programs to help specific needs within society, the last thing we want to do is to hold back on that. The very idea of Conservative principles has to do with there always being a progressive social policy. I would not want anything to do with a party that did not have that kind of progressive sense of making sure that everyone within our society had the physical health and personal needs in order to not only survive but to thrive and to have an opportunity. So we are concerned with the human deficit, and in order to do something about that, we have to do something about program expenditure.

It's a matter of reprioritizing. It's a matter of reorienting government thinking to make sure that we're not just continuing to build a huge bureaucracy and a larger public service, but that we have somehow put people first, that we've somehow brought back that fundamental sense that we're here to serve people. In fact, in all my giving a tough time to the New Democrats and the Liberals, I have to say that I don't think there is a member in this House who doesn't feel a genuine sense to serve people, but we come at it in different ways. What I believe is that we have to establish an environment in which business can thrive and, as business thrives, we'll be able to afford to do more for those people who need our help and support within society.

Our next point is the fourth one in our statement of principles, that the private sector must be upsized while the public sector is downsized. Conditions must be created for a vigorous private sector to compensate for any reduction in the government's involvement in the overall economy, as well as to ensure career opportunities for public sector workers whose skills will be in renewed demand in a revived private sector economy. I couldn't believe more in the need to have a strong private sector economy.

I was reading today, and I received it earlier, last week, the Ontario Natural Gas Association submission to the Ontario Fair Tax Commission. They made an excellent presentation. They go into some of the principles for change as well to allow for a stronger economic performance.

The tragedy is that I didn't circle all the sections that were of concern to it as it had to do with the downsizing of the government. I'm sorry that I don't have it just at my fingertips, because they brought that into it. They did say that rather than adding new taxes, efforts should be focused on improving the fairness of existing taxes and on seeking intergovernmental consensus on required changes and administrative simplifications.

They had a number of other points, and there is something in their report that would have supported the argument I'm making that the private sector has to be upsized and the public sector downsized.

We have to reduce the amount of government there is. There is too much government in Canada. In fact, I've heard it said, and I believe it, that we have enough government in Canada, with all the different levels that we have, for 130 million people, not just the 30 million who make up this great country, Canada.

The next point, and the last one in our statement of principles is that public service reform must involve programs as well as people. It makes no sense to enact reductions to the staff of the Ontario public sector without a parallel review of the programs these personnel deliver. Every aspect of government service delivery should be reviewed to determine if that service is needed or if it could be delivered more affordably and efficiently in other ways.

That was one of the key amendments that our caucus and I made on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus during the debate on Bill 48, asking that there could be an expenditure review committee of the province of Ontario. Over the next three years, that committee would look at a number of the different aspects. It would look at the tremendous waste that's going on within the Ministry of Housing, where they have the year-end spending review. We'd have it in a minute.

Our leader recently raised in the House the problem where they had a directive to their different housing authorities, "Don't forget to make note of how much money you haven't spent this year so you can spend it in the spring spendoff." That kind of wasteful spending, unnecessary, would have been analysed, assessed and there would have been incentives brought in for everyone within the public service to try to address those areas of overspending.

The other thing we were saying is, look at existing programs of all kinds. Take your time and assess them all.

I sense that the Minister of Community and Social Services is beginning that process with welfare reform. I haven't had a chance to look at it in detail. It was announced today, and I will look at it. But if the intention behind that is that you're really trying to remove some of the problems to it and provide more

equity and fairness, and that you're looking for ways of getting people back to work and out of the welfare syndrome and circle and cycle of just being in it all the time, then that would be good.

When I look it and see that, if it's there, that would be especially pleasing. It's the kind of thing I want to see done across the whole broad public sector, where we then can identify opportunity for doing things more efficiently, doing things better, or being eliminated; then, if necessary, maybe amalgamate it.

It's the kind of thing that I saw as well, and that I wanted to refer to, in the whole statement that was made by the Ontario Natural Gas Association, where they're saying that in federal-provincial relations, what you have to look at is having constructive dialogue with the federal government. We don't have that. Our Premier doesn't even attend the Prime Minister's meeting. We want to get rid of conflicting national and provincial taxation strategies. Can't we somehow begin to work better as a country?

1550

We've seen the problems existing between Ontario and Quebec. New Brunswick is trying to work out the anomalies between its province and Quebec. Our member for Carleton, Mr Sterling, has been raising this in the House from the very beginning as a major national crisis, that the people who live in the eastern part of Ontario are not able to go and work in Quebec, and yet Quebec construction workers and others come to Ontario to work. Let's make sure that we synchronize our national and provincial strategies, especially in taxation.

What they also point out is the lack of tax policy harmony. It is true. We're taxed for schools at every level. Every level's collecting money on education and we're paying out an awful lot. People, as I talk to them, aren't necessarily happy with the product and quality that is going on. Not everybody is thrilled with the outcome within the school system today.

The duplication in tax administration: Isn't it terrible that here we now have storekeepers who should almost be given money to collect the GST and the PST? They are spending time out there collecting taxes for the government. If they miss a payment on time, they're fined. We're so fast to get in there to make sure they've got the money forwarded to the coffers of both the federal and provincial governments as quickly as possible. We've got duplications, certainly, in the collection of sales taxes between the federal and provincial governments. Couldn't there be a way of homogenizing it, of putting it together?

Then, when you come along and try to find out what's going on, it's just about impossible. I know that seniors in my riding have had a terrible time. My riding office put together a seniors' guide, because we couldn't figure it out ourselves. It took us some six months to

put together the information in one cover-to-cover manual to tell seniors exactly what's available for them at the federal and the provincial and at the local levels. Because we've got so much government, each one is tripping over itself, doing its own thing, without, again, synchronizing their activities.

Then we have, as they point out, the differing ideologies and questions of control. They go on. They make a series of recommendations. I guess that's the problem: Everybody's been making recommendations on the problems we have with the spending and the taxation, but you can't get a government to listen. The only time the governments start to listen is when there's an election coming up. I'll tell you, you see it right now with the feds. With an election coming this fall, if anyone wants to get hold of their federal member of Parliament, now is the time to get hold of them. They're returning their calls now because there's an election coming up.

The truth is that so often with politicians, for one reason or another, having been elected, they lose touch with their constituents in being able to keep in touch with them as to what's important, what's needed, "How can we do something to help them?" Those become the principles that are part and parcel of what we see a responsible government moving towards, not a government that's coming in and saying, "Give us the permission to borrow another \$17 billion for the next two years."

Two of the phone calls I had yesterday—both people will remain anonymous. It has to do with the failure of government to deal with people. One was a woman who I know is just a fantastic lady who has coped for a number of years. She is a senior citizen. Her husband is now in a nursing home in our community. He's in semiprivate. Without any notice, without her being aware of it—she's very limited in her means but is able to afford to pay for the proper comfort and care of her husband—the semiprivate rate increased by \$247 in that seniors' home. She didn't have any notice of it at all. So suddenly one month it was less by \$247 and the next month she has to pay that much more.

She is going to find the money to be able to pay for it because she's extremely happy with the care and attention that her husband is receiving. But the fact of the matter is that we in this province of Ontario forget how important it is to serve the needs of people, to make sure that they understand what we're doing and why we're doing it and that the administrative procedures are in place so that they can have some comfort level that we give a darn.

Anyway, when she asked what I could do about it, I said: "There's not very much. The government is having to recover more money from its seniors in order to pay for the services that are being provided. I just don't know what else you can do but pay."

I had another lady, and she's a pensioner. Her property taxes this year in the Thornhill community of Markham have increased by \$350. She receives \$14,000 annually and pays, personally, \$2,500 in income tax. The education tax alone is \$1,800 and she says, "We never had children, but we still pay that." The government encourages the elderly to stay in their own homes as long as possible, but then it makes it impossible for them to live there because of the increase in the cost of living in their own place.

I tried to explain to her that in fact a lot of this began during the Liberal regime when there was a downloading of provincial government services to the local municipalities. They mandated that school boards would have to provide junior kindergarten and they mandated pay equity and then they mandated court security levels. All that affected the local tax level. Then you keep on seeing more things passed on to other levels so that as one government says it has balanced the budget, it has done it on the backs of the taxpayer who is paying at the local level.

She said, "Can you give me some suggestion on what I can do?" Should she start a petition and what can she say? I said, "Beyond becoming involved in the political system in some way"

—I didn't use it as a chance to sell a Conservative membership—I said, "Get involved so that when you have a chance to vote for somebody you know what they stand for and what they're going to do."

I pointed out to her that in the by-elections in Metro Toronto this year for Don Mills and St David-St George, it was 42% and 44% of the population who went out and voted. In other words, well over 50% didn't even bother to become involved in the election.

Therefore, what people have to do, if governments are going to be accountable—we have to be accountable to individuals and people who elected us, and we have to be able to report back to them on a regular basis. We have to be able to apologize for what we did, and to apologize in the traditional old-fashioned language was a way of explaining what you've done and why you've done it. This government that's elected today, the New Democrats, have a lot to apologize for. They have an incredible amount to apologize for.

I have a couple of other things that just tie in to what is happening in this province. One is a letter from Marty Goldgrub. Yes, that's his name. Marty no longer runs his business in Ontario. I have an insurance firm in my riding and it sent me a note that said: "Don, the enclosed is self-explanatory. We thought perhaps you might find the same interesting." What happened was that they were sending for a renewal from this company and they got a letter back from Mr Goldgrub.

"I just received your invoice for the commercial package for the office and warehouse. It occurred to me

that I should have called you sooner. During the month of May, I moved the warehouse to Niagara Falls, New York. It's funny that you would include a sheet on the new provincial sales taxes on insurance, for it is all the taxes and the government bureaucracy that finally convinced me to move the business to the States.

"There are inherent problems having a business there and living here, but they are trivial as compared to the uphill battle a small business faces here in Canada, and particularly in Ontario. This goes for all of us in the trenches. Governments must realize that there is no more and we can't be pushed any more.

"In my case, two jobs are gone and future employment opportunities will not be in this country. The bottom line after my diatribe is that as of May 31, 1993, I no longer need the commercial package. If you want to, send this letter to Bob Rae.

"Best regards,

"Marty Goldgrub."

Marty, I just gave it Bob Rae and he'll get it in Hansard and in the 20,000 copies that go around. There is just another person who has hit the wall of Ontario's inefficient, incompetent New Democratic government. God bless him. I'm sorry he isn't here to help us out of the recovery. I'm sorry he's not here to be on deck to help us in 1995 when the New Democrats are gone and we have a new Conservative government in power in Ontario. That is the sad news for him.

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): That's a lot of hot air.

1600

Mr Cousens: I have another letter. You'll love this one, Mr Mackenzie, Minister of Labour. Mr Mackenzie will love this. So will you, Randy. This guy's writing me. He didn't sign it. I don't normally read a letter that isn't signed. He says:

"Dear Mr Cousens:

"I'm writing to tell you that I am a crook. I do not want to be, but working in this economy, with the country and this province controlled by the silly buggers that are in power, I have no other choice."

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): Signed, Richard Nixon.

Mr Cousens: No, it isn't. But he does go on and say, "What bothers me is that I know that one day I'm going to get caught."

Here's what he says: "Today, 100% of our clients, new or old, refuse to pay the taxes. I can convince maybe 30% to pay a minimal amount. I've not been able to calculate it yet, but since the latest provincial budget came out, I'm sure the percentage has dropped.

"In the good times, I'd submit about \$2,400 a month in PST. Today I submit about \$300 a month. That's an 88% drop in government revenue from me alone, even

though my total sales have only dropped 30%. Federal returns have dropped even more, because before, I was paying 13% on over \$200,000 in purchases. Today I do not submit anything, as my minimal tax payments on purchases which are not cash deals outweigh any taxes collected. This also affects my tax returns, both commercial and personal, as naturally, I'm not going to leave myself open for a sales tax liability, so I state my loss in my business and no income for me personally.

"Again, where I once paid \$20,000 a year in provincial income tax alone, now I pay nothing, and because I personally cannot show an income, my wife pays even less. All of this means that I've held back, by today's estimates, about \$25,000 a year in provincial sales tax and provincial income tax. And this is only me. Multiply this by the number of people who are doing it, and you've just wiped out the deficit.

"Many of those out there who are avoiding taxes are also like me, small businessmen who do not want to evade the taxes, but because of the economy and the buying public's attitude, we have no other choice but to turn into crooks. We cannot afford to walk away from business because our clients refuse to pay the taxes due, and we cannot afford to cover the tax liability ourselves.

"So the next time you're standing up in the House, please thank those in power for turning my mother's little boy into something that she never expected. With bad fiscal management, during an extremely difficult economic time, this government has made me a crook, and I resent that more than anything else that they have done or will ever do.

"Naturally, I leave this letter unsigned. You guys are going to be knocking on my door soon enough, and I'm certainly not going to help you get there."

We've got a problem in Ontario. There's no way this government's going to begin to do anything about it. They're going to go out, march to the bank before the end of 1994 and collect another \$17 billion. Well, I hope they don't get it.

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired. Are there any questions or comments?

Mr Sutherland: I just have one question for the member for Markham. I want to know if he told his insurance company who passed on the letter and the business person who said he moved to Niagara Falls, New York, that maybe one of the reasons taxes are higher here in the province of Ontario is due to the federal government's policies of free trade, putting people out of work so they can't pay, the reduction in federal transfer payments to the province of Ontario and the fact that the federal government continues, even with a new leader, to ignore the concerns and the issues of the largest province in this country. Could he respond and let us know whether that is the response he has sent back to this person?

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I always find it entertaining to listen to my friend from Markham deliver a speech in the House, even if I disagree with the contents of that speech. I would have been quite interested to hear him elaborate further, because there are ramifications in the loan act, on the change in the Progressive Conservative Party from the second reading to the third reading on the Social Contract Act. I was very hopeful that the Conservative Party would have analysed the bill carefully, would have on that occasion spotted the flaws in it and on a principle basis would have said: "We simply cannot support this. We understand why the government's bringing it forward, but we can't support it."

It certainly took a lot of telephone calls and letters and so on. They must have been coming in to a great extent. We started to hear the change coming, and I've known my friend from Markham long enough, I think, in this House to know that he probably at the beginning felt that bill was so fatally flawed that it could not have been improved, that going through the exercise of proposing amendments to a bill which was so contrary to many of the principles which people have stood for in this House—I was quite surprised, and I know he'll help me out considerably in that matter, at seeing the Conservatives go from second reading, where they were with the government because they were saying this was close to Tory policy, to third reading, where they headed entirely in a different direction.

I think it's probably a sign—and I guess this is good for democracy—that those telephone calls coming in to the office of the leader of the Progressive Conservatives and the letters and personal representations made to members of the Legislature indeed had a considerable influence. I want to congratulate the member for joining his colleagues in voting with the Liberal Party on third reading against that piece of legislation, which will have ramifications even on the bill we're speaking about today. I look forward to the response, which I know will be positive and have the proper injection of humour.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further questions or comments? If not, the member for Markham, you have two minutes.

Mr Cousens: Let me deal with the honourable member for St Catharines, who is always a treat. When we voted for the social contract on second reading, it was much the same as the Liberals when they voted on second reading of Bill 4, the rent control legislation.

Mr Bradley: That was different.

Mr Cousens: No, it was the same thing, buster. Then when it came to third reading and it just didn't go right, they voted against it. So how can you come along and say what you just did?

Notwithstanding that, when we made the decision in

support of making amendments to Bill 48, the social contract, I got a letter just today. It gives me a chance to read it. It was a letter from the Georgina Public Libraries. The chief executive officer says:

"In my opinion, those amendments of the PC caucus would have created a bill which would have been a fair compromise working towards fiscal responsibility. On behalf of a small group of employees who will be very adversely affected by Bob Rae's social contract, I thank you for your efforts."

You say we wasted our time putting in those amendments. We at least represented the small people, the people out there who make up a strong Ontario. I'm proud to be part of a party that was willing to stand up and try to make something better. I'm disappointed that these people over here who call themselves politicians couldn't accept any of our 29 amendments, but that being the case, that's what you win and lose in this game, and I'm here to win. I hate losing.

The honourable member for Oxford, you'd better remember where you are. You're living in Ontario. Ontario is in a position to do an awful lot to either hinder or help free trade. We've been helped by free trade when it comes to the automotive market. When you look at the surplus that we now have in automotive trade with the United States, it's been a boon. Don't say it's been bad.

The one thing that really disappoints me, though, is that if the federal government made a mistake, it set up expectations on free trade. I thought they'd be doing a lot more to help us adjust to the ramifications of free trade. I think the federal government has really let down Ontario and Canada, because those people who have had to adjust to it have not been able to do it easily.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any other members who wish to participate?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Markham, you had over 32 minutes to speak. Are there any other members who wish to participate in this debate?

Mr Bradley: I appreciate the opportunity, albeit I'm confined by Bob Rae's rule changes of last year to speaking for only 30 minutes on this particular important bill, which has great ramifications for this province.

I hear, interestingly enough, the old threat of the government that not only is it content that it has a new set of rules that were brought in in July of this year, but of course, whenever it feels legislation isn't moving as quickly as it should, it wants to bring in even more draconian measures. If this were to happen, I think you would see the greatest uproar this Legislature has seen since the election of the New Democratic Party government.

But that's always interesting to see, because I well recall my good friends on the government side, particu-

larly those who have served in the past, who were the defenders of liberty, who were defenders of proper and appropriate and comprehensive debate on legislation. I know they will be putting the brakes on the Premier and others who would simply like to see this Legislature used as a machine to put forward what perhaps the bureaucracy wants, but more likely what the political operatives in the Premier's office want for legislation.

I was reading a book the other day that is called *Just Call Me Mitch*, the life of Mitchell Hepburn. I was trying to think, "Who does Mitchell Hepburn most remind me of these days?" I was thinking, "It can't be a person in the New Democratic Party," because consistently the New Democratic Party has been critical of some of the things that Mitchell Hepburn did in the past, but you know, the more I read the book, particularly when it got into dealing with labour legislation, the kind I found in the social contract, I was slipping and I was saying, "Mitch Rae" instead of "Mitch Hepburn."

1610

Mr Hope: It doesn't look like you opened the pages yet. It doesn't look like the pages are creased.

Mr Bradley: I don't crease the pages when I'm reading.

But I want to read further into the book, because it really reminds me very much of what I read here. When things got difficult, it appears they were certainly prepared to take it out on the collective bargaining process in Ontario, and I see that that has been somewhat abrogated by legislation which just passed the House.

Then I thought of some other people who have been commenting lately. I will be quoting Tommy Douglas a little later on. I'm just waiting for my assistant to bring that down to me. If Brad Ryder is listening right now, he should bring down that information to me. But I've been reading Michael Davison, and Michael Davison has had column after column.

For people who don't know who Michael Davison is, Michael Davison was the member for Hamilton Centre, and certainly a hard-nosed, fighting New Democrat, the kind that one always expected to be the true New Democrat of the 1980s and 1990s. And unlike some people who write columns in newspapers and simply defend the government even when the position of the government is indefensible, who are simply virtually flacks for the government and use their columns for those purposes, Michael Davison certainly has not been that. He has expressed a very independent point of view, albeit his own point of view, and I expect that, but as a New Democrat. I know my friends, particularly from the Hamilton area, must be opening the *Hamilton Spectator* daily and eagerly to see what Michael Davison is saying on each occasion. I have quoted some of the things he's said in the past. I might have time later on in my address to the House to quote them.

Hon Richard Allen (Minister without Portfolio in Economic Development and Trade): You can't tell him from a Conservative any more. They all sing the same song.

Mr Bradley: Michael Davison is now being attacked. I would have thought Michael Davison was somewhat left of everybody else.

Interjection.

Mr Bradley: The member for Hamilton West has become very exercised. He's usually a very calm, cool, collected, cerebral individual in this House. I mention Michael Davison, and there appears to be a lot of interjections coming.

Michael Davison is a person who was a true New Democrat, and he continues to say things that I know will disturb the government caucus, but I think secretly there are some people sitting over there who say: "Good for you, Michael. You're the kind of person we really need in this party to keep us on our toes."

I read a number of publications. This week's *Maclean's* magazine has a headline on the cover that says, "So Long Solidarity: A Crisis Within the NDP Rocks Canadian Socialism." They have a wonderful photograph of our Premier, Mr Rae, who did not want to have a photo opportunity with the Prime Minister of Canada. As I mentioned in the House, one thing I could always say about my good friend the Premier is that he was never one to turn down a public photo opportunity when the television cameras were there, and I find now that he was not prepared to do so.

And I understand. Listen, I understand what the Tories are up to. I'm not pretending that a photo opportunity wasn't part of this. I'm not saying that. I'm not a person here to defend the Conservative cause.

The thing that I think emerged from this, though, was that my Premier of my province, until such time as he's re-elected or defeated, whatever the population chooses, looked small and petty by not meeting with the federal Prime Minister. I can understand some of the motives there. I think it just made him look as though he was somewhat small.

Roy Romanow, a New Democrat: Roy shows up and he's prepared to enter into some discussions. Mike Harcourt, a long-time fighter for the NDP cause: Mike was there. He didn't head off to Asia or somewhere else on a trade mission; he was there to meet with the Prime Minister. Only Mr Wells, who had plane trouble, was unable to make it. All of them came out and said: "This was a useful exchange, a good start. This person, whether we like her and her policies or not, is the Prime Minister of Canada."

What I'm most afraid of is that our Premier, my Premier, the Premier of all the people of Ontario, once an election is over, is going to find that when he gets into his final year of office, others are going to say:

"Well, you're just going into an election campaign. We won't meet with you because it's a political exercise or it's simply an opportunity to have a photograph." I wouldn't want that to happen, because I want our Premier to be taken seriously. Whether I'm in agreement with what he's saying or not, I want him to be taken seriously by others in this country.

I think it's an unfortunate precedent and I think he would have been better to bury the political hatchet. The people out there are telling me they don't want the federal and provincial governments fighting along partisan lines; they're looking for them to work together. That's not easy, because there are views that are different. I certainly have different views from the federal Progressive Conservative Party on a number of issues, as I'm sure members of the government do, but I think it would have been nice to have our Premier there putting our case forward.

I hope that if a future opportunity arises he'll be there, and I hope that I'll be saying to people in the last year of this government's office: "I hope you still meet with our Premier even though he's in his last year of office before an election and even though it may appear he's simply looking for a photo opportunity or something. I don't want you to think that. I want you to be able to deal with a person until such time as the government changes."

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): That's a good point.

Mr Bradley: The member for Scarborough-Agincourt and I were discussing this the other day in a non-partisan manner, and we were hoping that indeed that would be the case.

Interjection.

Mr Bradley: I'm still waiting for the Tommy Douglas quotes, but I'm asked to comment on Tommy Douglas. Now, one of the people whom I admired in politics over the years, and I used to quote him often, was in fact Tommy Douglas. One interesting quote I well recall.

I admire him because he was the pioneer of provincial medicare in this country and I was a strong supporter of medicare as it was implemented in this country, and he had a difficult battle to fight on that occasion to implement it. He would be, I'm sure, were he alive today, extremely concerned when he saw that the NDP was now embarking upon user fees against individuals in our province. Tommy would have been, I think, as I know of his policies—

Mr Hope: Be careful.

Mr Bradley: The member for Chatham-Kent says, "Be careful." He may know something about Tommy that I don't, but Tommy was a person who I don't think was in favour, as far as I can recall, of user fees in the health care system. But he said something that covers an

awful lot about what we have been doing in this House, what this government has been doing. He said, and it makes me hark back to the election campaign of 1990, "I would much rather be defeated fighting for something I believe in than get elected standing for nothing at all."

I can well recall that the New Democratic Party in 1990 was fighting for a number of things. They stood for a number of things that perhaps the mainstream of Ontario may not have stood for at that period of time. Perhaps it was a minority of people within the province, but you knew where the NDP stood on these issues. They had the Agenda for People. My friend for Scarborough-Agincourt, Mr Phillips, often brings it out and talks about the Agenda for People.

Hon Mr Allen: Most of it's done now.

Mr Bradley: I look carefully down there. I'd like to see it implemented. The member for Hamilton West, who had the portfolio at one time of Colleges and Universities, I know was a long advocate of abolishing tuition so that people of all—

Hon Mr Allen: No, I never have. No, I never personally advocated that.

Mr Bradley: Well, he never personally advocated it, but it seemed to me it was in the Agenda for People or the NDP platform over the years. Now I see that not only has tuition not been abolished, but tuition has been increased for students.

I understand the economic circumstances, but it goes back to what Tommy Douglas said. Tommy said, "I would much rather be defeated fighting for something I believe in than get elected standing for nothing at all." When we see policy after policy after policy of the NDP being cast aside, one wonders whether the party was standing for nothing at all on that occasion. I don't want to believe that, but that might happen. If they go back to the electorate again, that might happen.

Now, sitting in the chair—and I hope the member for Victoria-Haliburton will be sitting in this chair till the end of this session of Parliament, this whole Parliament, until there is an election. I hope the fact that he has shown some independence will not prompt the Premier to give orders to have him removed from the chair, because I've always appreciated his objectivity in this House. Even though he sat as a member of the New Democratic Party, I certainly appreciated the fact that although he may have disagreed with some of the things that we on this side said, he was impartial in the chair. Now, I have this feeling that those who have a streak of vindictiveness in them will want to remove him from the chair.

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Mr Phillips: No.

Mr Bradley: My friend from Scarborough-Agincourt cannot believe it. He, as well, does not think that could possibly happen. But now that I see him in the chair, I

have a file that is referred to as "Casino gambling" and I've asked a number—

Mr Phillips: The NDP are against that, aren't they?

Mr Bradley: Well, I thought the NDP was always against that, I really did.

If I went person to person in the NDP before this government was elected and said, "Are you in favour of casino gambling?" which is largely a tax on the poor, I think most New Democrats said, "We're prepared to fight against casino gambling." I admired that stance, I agreed with that stance, as I did with a number of the old CCF policies which I thought were quite progressive. Then I find out through the newspapers, because the government certainly wasn't easily announcing it, that the NDP was thinking of establishing casino gambling.

One has to wonder what comes next. Will it be the video display machines that have caused so many problems in other provinces, that have people totally addicted to them, that have people throwing bad money after good and good money after bad, because it's just one chain of money going out to these machines and other forms of gambling.

I think the New Democratic Party still has a chance to change its mind on this issue. If I thought they did, I would not say, "Sound the bugles of retreat." I would not be critical. I would not call it a flip-flop. I would say the NDP has come not only to its senses but back to its roots, if it were to abandon casino gambling.

The reason I bring up casino gambling under the purview of this bill is because obviously some of the money that is gained through the loans of this province or the financial affairs of this province has to do with expenditures on casino gambling. I hope it will be abandoned because, first of all, the only good argument in favour of it is in fact that it has in total a positive financial impact, and that happens only if you're the only game in town.

If you're the only person with a casino anywhere around, you can make some money. But Ontario is not. I've watched the vote in Detroit over the years. It has been soundly defeated when put to the people of Detroit whether they will have a casino there. The last one, however, which was held in June, when they heard that Ontario was thinking of establishing one in Windsor, the vote was very close—about 51% to 49%.

I hate to use this terminology, but you can bet your bottom dollar that if in fact there is a casino established in Windsor, we will see one in Detroit which will be a huge operation which will take the money away. If you establish one in Niagara Falls, Canada, they'll establish one in Niagara Falls, New York, and if you establish one anywhere in a border area, you can be sure that somebody else will have one.

So it removes the argument that it's a cash cow. By

the way, one of the things I think is a cash cow is this bill that they have for setting up cameras for the police department to collect money when they should be doing others things than collecting money from motorists in the province, but I might get a chance to talk about that a little later.

But on casino gambling, I don't think it's going to be the only game in town. I don't think it's going to net the government the kind of money that it would hope for, and I'll get back to it.

Interjection.

Mr Bradley: The member for Middlesex wants me to come back to it. I'll certainly deal with it then because I know she wouldn't want her police forces simply setting up cameras to collect money, but would want them to be devoting their time, effort and energy to getting the really bad drivers off the road and to catching crooks in this province instead of collecting money. We know, of course, that with casinos coming in Ontario, they'll have to devote even more of their time to fighting organized crime, and they won't have time to be manning and womanning the cameras that are out in the province.

The second point I want to make on casino gambling is that it really appeals to those who are addicted to gambling, to those who are prepared to squander virtually their entire paycheque, because it's a disease. They can't resist the impulse to be gambling their money away, and the most glamorous kind of gambling by far is casino gambling. So we're going to find out that in fact we have a problem with those who are addicted to gambling and we're going to have to devote far more money then to countermeasures in that regard.

Third, we're dealing with organized crime. I was quoting in the House the other day from people who know this well. One of the people I mentioned was William Jahoda, who is a former mob overseer of gambling in Chicago. He wrote a letter on May 16, 1992, to the Chicago Crime Commission and I quoted this in the House in my question to the minister.

It said, as follows, "that converging on Chicago 'will be every pimp, burglar, drifter, car thief, booster, arsonist, counterfeiter, prostitute, dope dealer, con man, hijacker, extortionist and worse.'" He says this is what casino gambling will draw to Chicago, and one I think can sense the fact that this could happen even in good old province of Ontario. I don't know how you can resist organized crime.

I heard this afternoon, for instance, the member for Brampton North, Mr McClelland, ask a question about the choice of the site. Apparently, there was a political decision made. They were asked, "Where would you like to have it?" One of the ministers in the area—it is alleged the member for Windsor-Riverside, the Minister of Education and Training—said, "I want it downtown

in Windsor," which I can understand. I can understand him saying that.

But they had set out a process where they said, "Everybody can give a bid, not necessarily a tender, but everybody can say where they would like to have it." I thought that was reasonable that if they were going to do it, that's what they would do, but already we have political interference saying, "It's going here instead of somewhere else." I'm afraid we're going to see that happen when organized crime moves in, as it inevitably does.

The best example I saw—frankly, I was quite flabbergasted to see it—was when Donald Trump appeared on the CBC program *Venture*. Everyone here knows that I am a very ardent fan of the CBC, which I consider to be a very impartial network that never gives the NDP too much of a break.

Laughter.

Mr Bradley: There's laughter in the House. I don't know why. I just love the CBC. They do a good job.

Venture was asking Donald Trump, who is a big-time operator, what he thought of casino gambling, and Donald Trump, of all people, sat there in an interview and talked about all of the disadvantages of casino gambling. They even asked him about whether he thought it was going to be good for the city of Windsor and he suggested it would not be.

I was shocked, because of course Donald Trump is an individual who is going to be making a bid in Windsor. He said, "If you're going to do it, I don't think it's going to be good for your community, but I'm going to be there to bid on it, if indeed you're going to have it in your community." I thought that was one of the most compelling arguments.

We're not talking about some of the old speeches of Bill Temple or Woodsworth, or H.W. Herridge or Harold Winch, or any of the icons of the CCF and NDP. We're talking about Donald Trump, big-time developer, big-time financier, talking about the problems with casino gambling.

We find as well that there are going to be adverse effects on the horse racing industry, which provides a lot of jobs for a lot of people. The member for Fort Erie and I were discussing, along with other members in the peninsula, the importance of the Fort Erie track to the Niagara Peninsula and that many of the people who have an opportunity to work in that particular venue were in fact people who were grooming the horses, looking after the horses—they love them—were people who perhaps didn't have some of the skills that will be required for other jobs. She was talking about the importance of that. Casino gambling is going to adversely affect that. It is also going to be taking away money from the local charities, the local volunteer organizations that have little fund-raising nights. That is

where the money is going to be drawn away.

I cannot think of a good reason why particularly an NDP government would proceed with this. If it were Social Credit, I might understand it. If it were perhaps an extreme right-wing or libertarian party, I might understand it.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): Yes, but they've given up all their principles.

Mr Bradley: Maybe that's what we're dealing with, says the member for Brampton South. But I am disappointed that my friends in the NDP have not persuaded the Premier, at one time one of the greatest opponents of casino gambling, to abandon that.

Some of the other issues that we're dealing with these days: I am getting an awful lot of telephone calls at my constituency office about a number of items. I'm very pleased that the people call to express their point of view and that they write to me to make some positive suggestions on what the government might do to govern in a different way in this province.

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One of the things they're very concerned about is the increased cost to seniors. I'm getting several calls. The member for Scarborough-Agincourt, the member for Halton North, the member for Brampton South, the member for Etobicoke West, we're all getting calls from seniors who are concerned that they're seeing some very significant increases in the cost of care within nursing homes and other homes. They're seeing these jumps coming all at once and that makes it mighty difficult.

I think I'm going to be getting some more quotes from Tommy Douglas in just a moment. The member from Scarborough will get those for me. But I'm concerned about that.

Our House leader, Mr Elston, the member for Bruce, today raised the issue that there's a lot of concern out there, naturally in the community that I represent, about the whole issue of the court system, how clogged the court system is and how what is transpiring out there ends up in plea bargaining and other things happening.

These matters are before the court today, so I'm not going to get into the details of those when they're before the court, but I simply want to share that I know my other colleagues from the Niagara Peninsula are getting telephone calls as well from people on this issue. As I say, we're always interested to know what the people are saying.

I want to go back to Tommy Douglas, because as I say, New Democrats in this House, when they sat on this side, used to quote Tommy extensively. Tommy represented at one time a Saskatchewan riding. He was defeated there fighting for something he believed in. Then he went to Burnaby-Coquitlam, I believe was the riding at one time, and he was defeated on that occasion. But Tommy always, as he said, would much rather

be defeated fighting for something he believed in than get elected standing for nothing at all.

Here's what Tommy had to say about matters. I think government members might be interested in this. He said, "If there is to be a leisure class in our society, let it be the men and women who have already contributed so much to the building of Canada." That sounds like senior citizens to me. I'm going to read that again, "If there is to be a leisure class in our society, let it be the men and women who have already contributed so much to the building of Canada."

So Tommy, along with Stanley Knowles, for instance, who was always a defender of senior citizens, these two well-respected people within the party, felt that it was important to defend the interests of senior citizens. Now we see that you're going to take away their ability to receive prescription drugs out of the drug plan, so it's going to cost them a lot more money. We see that you're going to charge them more in the nursing homes, and now they're going to have to pay that tax on insurance.

I wonder, when I see some of the measures being brought down, what Tommy would think, because I'm going to quote him again. This is from a book called Tommy Douglas Speaks. It's right in our own legislative library, by L.D. Lovick, and it's got some excellent photographs of Tommy. Here's what he had to say. He's talking about the NDP government in Saskatchewan:

"The philosophy of this government is 'humanity first.' We believe that the measure of any community is the amount of social and economic security which it provides for even its humblest citizens."

When I see the NDP government beginning to remove services from the humblest of its citizens, begin to talk about means tests, which used to be considered to be mean tests as opposed to means tests by members of the New Democratic Party, I wonder whether we actually have an NDP government or whether it's Social Credit. I really don't know, but Tommy said that, and I again say that Tommy was a person who was extremely well respected, not only in the NDP, but I think fair-minded, middle-of-the-road people in all political parties probably believe that Tommy Douglas was on the right track when he said that.

There's another quote here that my friend from Agincourt has found on page 263. He said: "The marvellous thing about New Democrats and about democratic socialists is that we are more than a political party. We are a great family bound together by common ideals and common objectives and a common dedication to a cause."

When I was looking at that, how common they were, I then picked up the latest Maclean's magazine and it said, "So Long, Solidarity." Then I picked up Rob

Martin's articles where he's critical of the government, a strong New Democrat in the London area, and Michael Davison and others, and I began to wonder if indeed it's not just another political party, because I think many of us who listened to the speeches of our good Premier, the Rhodes Scholar—I listened to his speeches and I thought, my gosh, the NDP was different. I suspect any who have once been in the NDP and have left the NDP for whatever reason may feel that at one time the NDP stood for those things. As I say, whether you agreed or didn't agree with them, you knew where they stood.

Practicality has taken over, and so when I read in here that it's not just a political party, well, you know, if Tommy were around today, I think he would be very much disappointed in what he had found because: "The marvellous thing about New Democrats and about democratic socialists is that we are more than a political party. We are a great family bound together by common ideals and common objectives and a common dedication to a cause."

I'm looking at all the ramifications of the policies that have been brought down by this government lately. The Lincoln County Board of Education and other boards of education have faxed letters to us saying that they're in total jeopardy now, total anarchy as a result of the provisions of Bill 48 that just passed the Legislature. I know that local agencies are now phoning to ask, "Where do we stand in this regard?"

Mr Callahan: Children's aid societies.

Mr Bradley: The children's aid societies, or family and children services, as it's known in our area.

Those ramifications are showing up, and I suspect in the next few weeks the letters and the telegrams, if there's such a thing any more, and certainly the faxes and the telephone calls are going to be coming in fast and furious to members of this government to ask them what they're going to do about the next wrinkle.

That's why the Liberal Party opposed that piece of legislation, because we thought it was fatally flawed from the beginning. It would have been easy to vote for restraint. That's always the easy thing to do. You say: "Oh yes, we'll get on the bandwagon. We'll vote for restraint no matter what because we don't want to be perceived to be against restraint." Well, everybody is for very careful expenditures, value for the dollar, restraint in the appropriate areas, but this bill from the beginning was fatally flawed, and that's why I was proud to stand in this House both on second and third reading and vote against that bill.

I thank members for their kind attention this afternoon and look forward to any comments that might be forthcoming.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Questions and/or comments?

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): I just want to take a couple of minutes. I always enjoy the light-hearted comments on the part of my colleague from across the way, Mr Jim Bradley. It's always most interesting to listen to his way of putting things across in a most jocular manner, but I think in a highly politically charged way.

I would remind the member of a couple of things, first of all that the whole tone of debate he took this afternoon I thought was one to minimize the problem we're facing as Ontarians and that we're facing as Canadians.

I think the member knows quite well that if you look across this country, there is a very big problem that every province has to deal with, as well as the federal government, in terms of what's happened to our economy. We can debate ad infinitum the reasons that has happened. I think most people can draw those conclusions themselves. But the problem we have is trying to deal with a very real problem, and I'm sure the member for St Catharines would agree that you have to do something.

The thing that struck me about the position you took was that on the one hand you're saying you're in favour of constraint, "But don't do constraint, because anything that looks like constraint is going against the principles of the New Democratic Party." I remind you that we have to be practical in our approaches to dealing with some very difficult problems.

I would also remind you that Tommy Douglas, when he became Premier of the province of Saskatchewan, basically took an approach of trying to wrestle with the very real problem that was happening within the economy of Saskatchewan. It took some 17 years to build up enough money within the treasury to move on medicare. So I appreciate the debate from the member, but I would only say that it was fairly highly charged politically, with regard to his comment, and I appreciate his response.

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The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments?

Mr Callahan: It was interesting to hear the member for St Catharines talk about Tommy Douglas, because Tommy Douglas truly was a person who cared, yet I watch this government talking about the education amendments where it's going to eliminate care for the hard-to-serve, the learning-disabled, this government that voted with the Conservatives, when the Mental Health Act was being amended, to absolutely deny to schizophrenics and their parents the ability to look after their loved ones. I find that amazing, absolutely amazing, and all in the name of constraint.

They're going to eliminate some 900 jobs for court reporters. Some 90% of them are women, single-parent

families. The NDP always talked about being in favour of women and single parents. What are they doing about it? They're eliminating it. The Attorney General hasn't even got the guts to put it through here as a bill. She'll probably do it by regulation. These people will lose their jobs.

There are librarians in the correctional system who are going to lose their jobs. They're women. They're probably the only buttress for people in the correctional centres so that they can get some literacy.

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): Are you speaking to what Bradley said? Speak to what Bradley said.

Mr Callahan: Well, you talk to the Attorney General about it. You find out about these things they're doing: cost constraints. Why don't you take away some of the rights for inmates as opposed to taking away their opportunities for literacy? Maybe if we can get them literate—there are 40,000 people who are illiterate in my riding. I'd love to know what kinds of moneys you've cut back from that program. You probably see that as unnecessary.

I'll tell you something. The member for St Catharines was dead on. Tommy Douglas would find your type of New Democratic policy totally objectionable, and you should be ashamed of yourselves.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? If there are none, the honourable member for St Catharines has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Bradley: I have a couple of further comments from Tommy Douglas here that perhaps would respond to some of these things, because I really enjoy quoting Tommy.

He reminds me of some of the interruptions in this House. He said the following: "I do not mind the interruptions, Mr Speaker. There is an old saying in the north that if you throw a stone into a pack of dogs and one yelps, you have hit something." Whenever one is able to provoke a reaction, Tommy said, that's what's going to happen.

Because the member for Cochrane South was concerned about whether I recognize the seriousness of the situation, I want to quote Tommy Douglas again on this. Tommy cautioned against panic. He said the following: "A recession is when your neighbour has to tighten his belt. A depression is when you have to tighten your own belt. And a panic is when you have no belt to tighten and your pants fall down."

My suggestion is that that's what happened in this circumstance, that all of a sudden there was a turn—I don't know if I'm supposed to say a 360-degree turn; at least a 180-degree turn—on the part of the government. They appeared to be fighting the recession by trying to create jobs, and said that was important; they were going to fight unemployment and the recession and not

worry that much about restraint.

It seems to me one of two things happened. The panic set in either after they watched the program on New Zealand on W5—that appears to be when it set in—or they became spooked by the people in New York City, the lenders who said, “Your rating’s going to go down a notch if you dare to do something other than what we dictate.”

I think Tommy was probably right when he said, “Yes, you have to deal with a recession and, yes, you have to deal with a depression, but don’t panic.” This piece of legislation we had is a true sign of that panic.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I always enjoy following my friend from St Catharines, who I think offered an interesting speech. It is true that he tends to be jocular in nature but somewhat biting, one of the few things I can agree with the member from Cochrane about.

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: The member for Middlesex is heckling again. I think she’s still upset about the humour course.

We’re talking about \$16,000 million. That’s how much this government is going out to borrow. They call it \$16 billion. It’s kind of neat to talk about it as \$16,000 million. It kind of brings it down to a level that more of us can comprehend.

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: No, I’m not saying it just for me; I think just for the general public out there. When you start talking about \$16 billion, to the member for Middlesex, it’s all such a huge number that they really can’t equate it to their everyday life. Unlike yourself: Being the wealthy, independent person you are, you can probably equate \$16 billion more easily than most of the taxpayers, but it sounds a little more interesting at \$16,000 million because it is a little simpler to equate for the average taxpayer.

It’s interesting that we’re debating this bill today, the day after the social contract came through. The little episode up top was rather interesting to see: The New Democrats’ supporters in previous years and at least during the last election came in here and so vociferously and vehemently condemned this government for its position on the social contract. It was very interesting. It makes you think that quite possibly, come next election, we could be in for some very interesting dynamics in this province. Maybe we will just see a rather significant split in this party, a party that may split off with its academic, eclectic sorts: the professors and so on, and the Stephen Lewises and the Bob Raes, the wealthy New Democrats who have done rather well through their lives and have come to this party in search of a certain vision. Maybe they’ll separate from the

rank-and-file union people who have supported this party so much in the way of workers and dollars and cents and so on and so forth.

I’m going to find it somewhat interesting, come 1995, to see exactly how that decision yesterday—I think that decision yesterday was historic, very historic. It was historic because we saw a great chasm, a split, take place within this party. Tommy Douglas himself, as we just heard, said they were a family. If they were a family, they’ve just had their dirty laundry hung out very, very publicly yesterday, with a split that probably hasn’t been seen or may never be seen again. I look forward to the election in 1995—I don’t think we’ll be going any sooner—and seeing exactly what effect that decision will have.

Mr Callahan: That’s what yesterday was all about, Chris, two years of solid work. They don’t have to go back out into the rain or do any heavy lifting.

Mr Stockwell: The member from Brampton makes his point. But I think it will be very curious in 1995 to see exactly how that decision will affect the rank-and-file members of the NDP.

Mr Callahan: You will be on the unemployment line. You gave away a principle. I am ashamed of you.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Those have got to be your favourite words. I am ashamed of you; I am ashamed every time you say those words.

Mr Callahan: You’ve got no principles.

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): You’ve more positions than Masters and Johnson, for heaven’s sake.

Mr Callahan: That is a sexist comment. I think.

Mr Stockwell: It’s not a sexist comment. It’s got to be the oldest joke in the world. We’ll just assume that Ed heard it very recently. Let us move on.

I say to the members in the House today that there’s been much talk about the reality of the fiscal situation we’re in; thereby, this reality has forced the social contract. I suppose there could be a scintilla—

Mr David Winninger (London South): A scintilla.

Mr Stockwell: I just said that; the member from London is now correcting me—of reason given for that thought. If there were any history within this party of having any concern at all about the public debt, about government spending and about fiscal reality; if this government, when it was in opposition, had offered up alternatives or solutions that would have reduced government spending or reduced debt, then there could be a degree of support of believability with respect to the social contract.

The very difficult task this government has is that when in opposition, never ever was enough, enough. Never ever were expenditures acceptable. Whenever

anyone brought forward a recommendation on government spending, it was never enough. That was the criticism, "More, more, more," and if you didn't give them more, you didn't care. You didn't care about the poor, you didn't care about the seniors, you didn't care about the working poor, you didn't care about the common folk, the people in the province of Ontario.

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So although you've made the argument, and the member for Cochrane made it once again, that there's a fiscal reality out there that you have to deal with, it rings hollow, in my opinion, because of your 50 years of history on the issue. Your 50 years of history were: "Damn the torpedoes. Spend all you can do. Tax the rich. Tax the corporations." If you read Agenda for People, how was this government going to pay for the promises that it made? Through increased taxes on the rich, minimum corporate taxes etc.

I find it a rather shallow argument to make that all of a sudden you people have found fiscal reality; you people are now fiscally responsible; you people are now the saviours of the taxpayers' dollars. Having said that, since they've become fiscal champions, while becoming a fiscal champion, you must give up the principles that you held so dear to your heart in opposition, because you can't be both. You can't be fiscal taxpaying champions and spenders and spenders and spenders. It just doesn't add up. If you're going to spend a ton of money, you've got to tax it to get it. If you don't tax it, you've got to borrow it.

So we've got a clash. We've got a really serious clash here. The clash is the reality of money versus the reality of the social problems and concerns that this government feels we have in the province today. I think that argument itself is somewhat shallow. I know from my friend the member for St Catharines—I talk around this province to a number of people, including Mr Bruce Williamson, "Booty" as they call him. He often writes to me.

I've received a letter or so in the past about the concerns that he has around this place. He's one person who in fact was a printer, worked at the local newspaper and now is retired and spends a great deal of his time watching the goings-on at this place. I think he himself would admit—Booty would say that the transformation to power has been astounding. The transformation of this party, once in power, has been astounding.

But I will say that they still haven't taken on the financial responsibility of admitting that some of this problem was their fault. They still insist on blaming the federal Conservatives and the transfer payments. I think there is some concern there. I think the federal government reduced its transfer payments. They capped them; that's what they did. They capped them at X and they didn't go on financing them ad infinitum. I also believe there was a deficit left by the Liberals. I don't think

anyone would say there wasn't. Even the Liberals will say they left a deficit and they ran up some debt, and the Conservatives before them ran up some debt.

But what this government still has not accepted is how completely wrongheaded that first budget it introduced was. This government, in the eyes of the beginning of the worst recession since the Depression, ran up a \$13-billion deficit. They've institutionalized double-digit deficits. They've institutionalized expenditures that can't be kept up with. They've run up in their two or three years some \$35 billion in government debt. Now they tell us, after spending \$35 billion they don't have, they're facing the fiscal realities that this government must accept.

Again it's a rather shallow argument. If truly this party wants to really admit why we're in the crisis we're in today, it was some dumb, stupid financial decisions made by the powers that be in the front benches of that government.

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: The member for Middlesex would know full well they stood here and their Treasurer said, "We've chosen to fight the recession, not the deficit."

Mr Callahan: And we're going to be spot on, eh?

Mr Stockwell: And he hasn't been spot on yet. What came of that? What came of that was the world bankers, the moneylenders out there told this government, "You either better clean up your act or we're not lending you any more money." What came of that? The social contract.

Don't tell me that this opposition party or the general public brought this government to its knees and forced it to realize it was in a fiscal mess. We all know who brought them to their knees. Who brought you to your knees were the world bankers because they told you, "You're in a mess and we're not lending you any more money." That's what brought you to your knees. That's what brought this government to its knees.

We face now today an episode like yesterday and the social contract vote that, in my opinion, has split this party in irreconcilable differences. In fact you may well see a petition before the courts in not too many years that will guarantee the separation—irreconcilable differences.

The irreconcilable differences are that one section of this government wants to go and run up the debt and the other section, small be it but the front benchers, has realized, finally, that you can't spend money you don't have.

That's how we get to borrowing \$16,000 million, but if they came forward today and admitted a clean slate and said, "Yes, we made some bold, bold mistakes in those first two budgets," I would agree with them. You know what? I'd work with them to try and put this situation back in order.

But rather than coming forward and making the admission that those first two budgets were a horrendous mistake—

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): They weren't a horrendous mistake.

Mr Stockwell: You see, they still don't admit they were a horrendous mistake: \$25 billion spent in money they didn't have; the social contract that's ripping this party apart; unemployment rates at 15%; an economy that is just absolutely dead; the most minor of growth projections are being quashed by this \$2-billion tax grab, and they still don't admit that those two budgets were a mistake. So they bring in their third budget which calls for this \$16,000-million loan.

The third budget, rather than admitting the faults and laying it on the table for the people to see, is full of jiggery-pokery: crown corporations set up to move debt off your books; crown corporations set up to move employees off your books; asking municipalities and school boards to borrow money on your behalf and you'll pay them back in 20 years. It's jiggery-pokery. It's smoke and mirrors. Why? Because they still haven't admitted those first two budgets were a horrendous mistake and they're in a financial mess.

Further to that, the social contract: My prediction is this social contract may well save you people \$2 billion but it is not saving your partners \$2 billion.

I put to the member for Oxford when he was answering the questions in place of the Treasurer—and I think he did an admirable job, as well as can be expected considering the complexity of that bill—the entire social contract is based on pay pause days. That's a big grab for money.

I said to the member for Oxford at that time, "Sir, who of these people are considered critical and will not be forced to take pay pause days, then ultimately thus be paid off three years later, thereby deferring the cost?" The member for Oxford tried his best, but he finally had to admit: "We don't know. We don't know who's critical. We don't know who's going to have their cost deferred."

They don't know how much money they're saving. That's the admission, as bald-faced as it is, as unbelievable as it is. They don't know how much money they're saving. They're saving \$2 billion, but what about their partners?

Let me give you an example. The Metropolitan Toronto Police Force, 5,000 policemen, they can't get their holidays as it is. They can't get their time off they have now. They're too busy. Now you're going to say to them, "You have to take 12 more additional days on top of the days that you don't get."

It will come as no surprise come August 1 that the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force will be classified as critical. What does "critical" mean? The member for

Oxford knows what critical means. I think the Speaker knows what critical means. I know the member for Scarborough-Agincourt, who I thank for the water, knows what critical means. It means you won't get the 12 pay pause days, so come 1996, you're going to have 5,000 cops in Metropolitan Toronto with 36 pay pause days in the bank. Now, they've got 36 pay pause days in the bank and you owe them the money. You don't, of course; your partners owe them the money, the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto. Where are the savings? That's not a saving, that's called a deferral.

1700

If I could have sat in this House yesterday and voted on the social contract, knowing full well there were \$2 billion in savings on a long-term basis, I would have supported it. I tell you now that I would have supported it. I believe in it. Check my record. I believe in cutting government. I believe in cutting the costs. But I'm not going to pull the wool over the eyes of the constituents and I'm not passing down government responsibility to my partners to pick up the costs for it. I thought you believed that too last election. Come 1996, when you go down to the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force, every cop's going to have 36 pay pause days. What do you say to them? The Treasurer says, "They can take their days off come 1996." That's what the member for Oxford said.

I say to you, if they can't get the days off in the three years this thing is in place, how the hell are you going to take them off come 1996? So what do they say? They say this. This is their answer. This is how shortsighted this piece of legislation is. Do you want to know how shortsighted this is? They suggested that come 1996—and the response—they'll hire somebody to take the cop's place who's going on holidays. Where's the savings there? This is the narrow, shortsighted, backward logic this kind of legislation puts in place.

What do we say to that? That's one example, just the police force in Metropolitan Toronto. What about all the other cops in this province?

Mr Phillips: What about the firemen?

Mr Stockwell: What about firemen? They've got banked holidays coming out of their ears. Every municipality has problems with their firemen and banked holidays. If you sat on any municipal council, you'd know that. What about those people who look after the seniors in senior citizens' buildings? They're mandated. What about day care workers? You mandated day care workers. How do you take a pay pause day when you mandate they've got to be at work? Where do they get the savings there? There isn't a saving.

What about teachers? What are you going to say? Their pay pause days come in July? What is that? That's going to be their pay pause day. I don't think the teachers are going to like that and I don't think they'll

agree to it. In some estimates, and I speak to this directly, municipalities have said that as many as 58% of our staff are mandated critical workers. They can't take a day off. Where are the savings for the municipalities? Do you know who they include? Who do you want to take a holiday, I say to the member for Oxford? A cop? A fireman? An ambulance driver? The mechanic who fixes the ambulance? The senior citizen's nurse? Who do you want? The day care worker? Who do you want to take the holiday? The TTC? We'll shut them down for a day. Who takes the holiday? There is no holiday.

But they get their \$2 billion and come 1996, I say in this House today, and I hope I'm here to measure the correctness of this statement, municipalities, school boards and hospitals will owe \$3 billion in pay pause days. So of your \$6 billion you save, you only save \$3 billion and you pass \$1 billion on to your partners in sharing. This is Bill 48.

I've been wanting to give this speech for a couple of days because I think—

Mr Sutherland: What about the loan act?

Mr Stockwell: This is all part of the loan act. This is why you're borrowing money, because of these kinds of things. What are they going to do with the Metropolitan Toronto School Board? It just reeks of absolute stupidity. It reeks of stupidity. Here it comes. How much money do you transfer to the Metropolitan Toronto School Board in transfer payments? It doesn't take long to calculate the figure: nothing. You've included them in your social contract. You're going to phone the Metropolitan Toronto School Board come July 1—you've probably placed the call already—and you're going to say to them, "Send me a cheque for \$90 million." That's what you're going to do.

Mr Perruzza: No, \$96 million.

Mr Stockwell: Okay, \$96 million. Can you imagine the absolute, breathtaking, how ironic this is? My taxes on my home, that I'm supposed to clear the streets and put out fires and educate my children with, will be sent to the province of Ontario to pay off your debt; my home owner taxes to pay your debt. We've got the Metropolitan Toronto School Board subsidizing the province of Ontario. That's unbelievable.

I don't know what they're saying. Mr Cooke, the Minister of Education and Training, stands up and he says the Metropolitan Toronto School Board will agree. I've seen the quotes from the senior bureaucrats of the Metropolitan Toronto School Board. Their quote to Mr Cooke is, "Over my dead body will you get this money."

The property taxpayer in Metropolitan Toronto, and Ottawa I might add, will then come forward to subsidize your lavish expenditures, your spending in the past two years and your irresponsible fiscal attitude. That's who

gets to subsidize you: my taxpayers, my home owners. I know this party believes one thing, because I've heard them say it a number of times, over and over again: If there's one form of regressive tax, it's the tax on homes. It's not based on the ability to pay. So you know what you're going to do? Single mothers, senior citizens, the lowest income people now are going to pay for your social contract because it was drafted hastily, without thought and without amendment. Where's the fairness in that? There's no fairness. This is your social contract.

I believe in reduction of government. I believe we could have reached a deal. I believe we could have come to a conclusion that maybe would have been painful. I'm not saying it wouldn't be. Of course it is. But this is nuts. This is lunacy. This is just something haphazardly put together because Bob Rae watched W5 one night. That's what this is based on. This is what it's based on.

Here we are with \$16,000 million more being borrowed at the taxpayers' expense. Here we go with \$3 billion transferred from your spending to your partners in pain, and they will accept your debts that you've spent the money for. Here we have local municipalities paying their home owner taxes to subsidize your spending. Where's the fairness? Where's the thought? Where's the reason? Where are the amendments? Where are the socialists? Where have they gone? I don't see any any more. I have no idea where they went.

No socialist I know would raise taxes on homes on a regressive tax and take that money and pay down a provincial debt. No socialist I know would do that. No socialist I know would take \$3 billion of government spending at a provincial level and transfer it to municipalities. No socialist I know would do that. No socialist I know would take a time during the worst recession and look at laying off upwards of 16,000 people so they can line up in the unemployment rolls. No socialist I know would do that. Whether it's 16,000 or 5,000; 16,000 was the figure; I will equate it back to 5,000. But nobody I know, no socialist, would do that during the worst recession.

What are the alternatives? I can only say my alternative to the social contract was very simple: a 5% rollback; everybody shares the pain, case closed. It's the only fair way. It's not going to be nice, it's not going to be pleasant, but it's the only reasonable answer to the mess that you created with \$35 billion in government debt.

You say to me that somebody under \$30,000 shouldn't be paying 5%. I say everybody's got to pay. We are in such an economic crisis everybody better get on board and join the club, because we're broke.

Hon Mr Allen: That's the crudity of your politics.

Mr Stockwell: It may be. The suggestion from the

member from Hamilton is that's the crudity of my politics. I say to you, sir, I don't believe in having taxpayers subsidize you and your spending from a municipal level. Home ownership taxes shouldn't be used to subsidize your spending. I also say to you that I don't think \$3 billion should be transferred to your partners, because you've introduced a bill that they can't put the people on pay pause days. It may be crude, it may be difficult and it may be painful, but you know what? It's fair. Everybody pays the same. Your system isn't fair. It's not fair at all. What's fair in your system?

1710

So we've come to borrowing \$16,000 million today, \$16 billion. We asked in this party for some amendments that weren't taken up. I continue to go back to that document I like to read sometimes, the Agenda for People.

Mr Phillips: This is the property tax one you were mentioning.

Mr Stockwell: There we go. Here's a quote in Agenda for People; I thank the member from Scarborough.

"The cost of this initiative over the next two years would be \$1.5 billion. That's also the \$1.5 billion in property tax relief for Ontarians. We want to reverse the punishing increases in property taxes which hit seniors and low-income people especially hard."

That's what I believe you wanted to do. I think that's a fair statement. What you're doing in Bill 48 is exactly opposite to what you said here. What you're doing in Bill 48 is prolonging pay pause days for cops, ambulance drivers—a whole list of them, 58% of them. You're saying to the municipalities and school boards and hospitals, "In 1996, you pick up your share, you pay them the \$3 billion, and you put it on the property tax bill." Further to that, you're asking Metropolitan Toronto taxpayers and taxpayers in Ottawa—seniors, single mothers, the working poor—to subsidize the social contract by sending you money, because you don't transfer them any transfer payments.

We can see how far they've come. And it comes to the end of my time, Mr Speaker. I thank you for keeping the House in order. I can understand why they don't agree. I can understand why it bothers them to hear this, and I'm certain it's going to bother them in the future.

I'll tell you, I'm not the only one saying this. This comes from all angles. You saw them yesterday. Those aren't my supporters. Believe it or not, Sid Ryan's not my supporter. Liz Barkley's not my supporter. It's not like I brought these people in to heckle you. I didn't. They've never supported me. They've probably never supported this party. They supported you, and they supported you because of this. You've gone so counter—180 degrees, as the member for St Catharines

said—that your legislation on Bill 48 is absolutely unfair; completely unfair.

I thank the members opposite for listening and I certainly look forward to any questions or comments that may be coming.

Mr Perruzza: To respond to a couple of the member's comments, the one about the social contract not being fair and what he would do, the 5% rollback across the board, he talked about the horrendous mistakes this government has made in the past, and I guess history will tell the tale on the performance of this government vis-à-vis the economy, vis-à-vis getting people back to work, vis-à-vis getting the finances of this place in order and in shape from the shambles and the ruins we inherited.

But I'll just quote a couple of the truly horrendous mistakes, the ones that history has already checked off as truly horrendous, that were made by the former Conservative government. You remember William Davis's establishment of Suncor, the bottomless pit where the then government and subsequent government threw hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money. Darlington: Do you need to say any more? Produce electricity you'll never be able to sell to anybody, because nobody will ever be in demand of that kind of power. Mistake? That was a \$16-billion mistake, a \$16,000 million mistake. History has already chalked that one up as a horrendous mistake.

Then he says 5% across the board on the social contract because that's fair. A government that tries to give some local control, some local autonomy to try to develop fair, reasonable, local agreements: That's not fair? He says that's not fair.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Further questions or comments? The honourable member for Brampton South.

Interjections.

Mr Callahan: Don't. Please, not in my time, all right?

I'd like to pick up on the comments of the member from Etobicoke whatever it is. I think one of the things he missed saying was that this government, after hearing debates in this House, suddenly discovered, "Well, what do we do with these people who retire before the end of 1996?" They brought in an amendment and here's their answer to it. Their answer to it is, "These people will be able to take the money." Now, in addition to having 36 days during which time crooks will run rampant in Toronto in 1996, when you haven't got any police officers to look after it, fires will burn and rage because you won't have any firemen to look after it unless you're prepared to hire the people to fill the 36 days.

You know what I find really incredible? The most hypocritical thing of this government is the fact that they know they won't be here in 1996 to pick up the 52

cards. They're going to put it on my kids, my grandchildren, their grandchildren. They are prepared to do anything possible with the hopes, with the gamble that casino revenues, the thing they couldn't stand when they were in opposition—and the only member, apparently, is Victoria-Haliburton, who rails against it—they're hoping that the casino profits they will make will get them the money to pay for all this.

Finally, I have to say in closing that I find it passing strange that the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, Madam Bingo, doesn't know that a South African corporation is bidding on a casino contract. I'd like to know how much investigation she and the rest of you have done on the other bidders and we how can be certain that organized crime has not in fact infiltrated one of the bidders. If they can't tell South Africa's involved, how do they know the mob's not involved?

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Further questions or comments? The honourable member for Markham.

Mr Cousens: I first of all would like to compliment the member for Etobicoke West for his eloquence today, and I'd compliment him as well for the control he exhibited. If there was ever a time when a person pulled himself back and withheld the true outrage he felt, it was today. What you saw was just the very edge of the temper and the anger and the frustration and the deep sincerity that this gentleman has for what is good and right for the province of Ontario.

I compliment you as well, Mr Stockwell, for—as you define it, \$16,000 million, doesn't that change it? It really starts to make it look like a lot of money. I mean, a million dollars—I was looking at the top 101 billionaires in the world today, and there are a couple who are close to it in Canada, but we're losing our share. In fact, the chance of anyone ever really earning a billion dollars in Canada unless we have a pile of inflation and some other things—but the government will take it all back from you, they'll claw it away and there won't be anything left. The fact that you're talking about \$16,000 million, and this government can come along and do that as if it's nothing. And the Liberals got in the habit before that; by the way, you also exhibited tremendous control in not accusing the Liberals of the tremendous wastefulness they perpetrated in the province of Ontario during their reign.

As we look at the total scene in the province of Ontario, let's start dealing with today and the present. What we have to do is that we're in this together to try to lead Ontario into the future. Indeed, the kind of leadership I saw from Mr Stockwell, the member for Etobicoke West, is exactly that. I thank him.

1720

The Acting Speaker: We can accommodate one final participant. The honourable member for Niagara Falls.

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): The previous member has talked about his view of Ontario's fiscal situation. I'd like to show a slightly different or more profound view of Ontario's fiscal situation, and this is quoted from June 27 from the Catholic New Times.

It says Newfoundlanders have faced adversity and so have the farmers of Saskatchewan. "Now it is Ontario's turn "to face the adversity of the economy....it is not an abundance of resource that makes justice possible. It is the generous...sharing of whatever is available that invites justice and joy into human affairs.

"Are Ontarians ready for the task of dividing the diminishing public purse more justly?

"The government of Premier Bob Rae, from where we sit, seems to have some pretty good ideas about how to begin.

"First of all, it's good news that the government is encouraging all parties to preserve jobs and services, rather than to preserve higher salaries for fewer workers.

"Next, it's good to exempt the lowest-paid workers," those earning \$30,000 or less.

"It's also good that unions are being treated as crucial social agents.... Union leaders have not...become irrelevant.

"On the contrary, this government" prefers "negotiated agreements to unilateral solutions. And the law sets strict limits on the extent to which signed collective agreements can be 'opened.' ...this process is not 'designed to destroy collective bargaining.'...

"Ontario's government is treating the views of workers as an essential voice in society's conversation about its future....

"There is pain ahead for our whole society, so long addicted to easy affluence."

And the conclusions?

"...we who are believers" face "the challenge to do better with less: to share more radically. We can help our entire society meet the present challenge without bitterness and without fear—although not, of course, without struggle."

The Acting Speaker: This completes questions and/or comments. The honourable member for Etobicoke West has two minutes in reply.

Mr Stockwell: To the member for Niagara Falls: I understand that position that you enunciated by the—I didn't catch the organization—

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): You don't want a—

Mr Stockwell: The member for Middlesex, the humour course is coming up, so don't worry.

I can only say that I just don't agree with them. I don't agree with their opinion or their philosophy—I don't think it's the best route to go—as I don't agree

with the government, and that's the beauty of democracy.

The member for Markham: Again he's his eloquent best and I have nothing more to add to that.

The member for Brampton South: There is some concern with respect to getting the money at the end of the day. I don't think there's an answer to that. I think in the future it will bear out the fact that the \$6 billion is a bit of a ruse. There is no \$6 billion. It may be \$3 billion, but the real \$6 billion is saved over there. The partners will have to pick up the additional \$3 billion.

The member for Downsview: I just want to comment quickly. Suncor: huge mistake, I agree, bad, bad mistake. Darlington: big mistake, I agree, shouldn't have been done. Casino gambling: My position on casino gambling was I'm pretty much in favour. I think there should be a split: money left in the community, money taken out by the operator, money given to the province of Ontario. I'm not a huge opponent of casino gambling.

I won't defend some of the decisions made by Bill Davis, and probably John Robarts and Leslie Frost, all of them. What I'm trying to say to you, though, is, based on the 43 years of their government, I think it was pretty well governed. I think we had a pretty good province. I think they did a pretty good job. I don't think there was ever a time in the public opinion polls where our governments, any governments—

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: You can't hear me and be yelling at me at the same time.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The member for Etobicoke West has a very short time to respond.

Mr Stockwell: I don't think that they did a bad job in their 43 years; I think they did a pretty good job. I also think that never in those 40 years of governments was their popularity as low as yours is today, and I think that should be very indicative to you and your government exactly how wrong the people think you are in the tack you're taking.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): For those who perhaps might be watching this scintillating debate at home, I just want to underline again that we are debating today the loan act, which will enable the province to borrow \$16 billion between now and December 1994.

I think it's important to point out that the need for the provincial government to avail itself of access to capital markets through the public markets and through the Canada pension plan is not in dispute. It enables the amortization of capital equipment in facilities, investment in our schools, in our roads, in our hospitals, in our sewers, in our water facilities and other capital programs.

I think it's fair, though, to point out that in order to borrow and in order to borrow at an appropriate rate, the government must have credibility not only in national but in international capital markets. The money will be available to finance the borrowing needs of the province not only from domestic sources but from international sources, and that has been very clear and very much a part of our history over a period of time. Indeed, over the past five years, the province of Ontario has done some imaginative financing in European markets. That began with the Treasurer between 1985 and 1990, when borrowings in Canadian dollars in the British market, by example, were first introduced.

It's very clear that there are no international borders left in financial markets, that the computer, the fax, the international financial news media etc provide the assurance that whether one is in Tokyo, New York, London, Munich or downtown Toronto, one knows and makes investment decisions based on the immediate news of the time.

International markets, capital markets, work 24 hours a day. There is no difference in terms of access to information about what is on the agenda and how well the fiscal management of the province is operating. Therefore, the credibility of the fiscal plan in this province is paramount and is being judged by experts not only down the road on Bay Street or a block away—the investor who, himself or herself, wants to invest in provincial bonds—but by international experts in many centres of the globe.

The management of the fiscal plan is judged on a daily basis and analysed on a daily basis by people who are experts and who are reviewing the fiscal and financial capabilities and management of many, many other government jurisdictions, and the credibility of Ontario's plans has to be placed side by side with those.

The current fiscal plan, as you know, calls for a \$10-billion deficit. The fiscal plan of 1992-93 ended with a \$12-billion deficit. The bottom line on that particular fiscal plan changed three times during the implementation of that plan. Since this government came into power, there has been \$35 billion of new debt added to our fiscal problem, new deficit added on an annual basis and added to the long-term debt of the province.

In each case, in each fiscal plan that has been presented to the Legislature by this government, both the revenue and the expenditure projections were singularly off base. They were not spot on as the Treasurer indicated to us last year, and the credibility of the fiscal management has clearly been brought into disrepute.

I'm going to speak to that in a couple of areas, but it seems to me that, for the most part, the projections have been singularly out of whack on the revenue side of the budget. If we look at the 1992-93 budget plan and what the interim or final results were of that plan, we find that the Treasurer miscalculated the revenue sources by

some \$3 billion.

One of the reasons this revenue source was so badly miscalculated was that the government decreased confidence through its actions in business investment. It created a climate for business investment that in fact was a dilatory one. Whether it was the labour legislation bill that certainly assured that the business community would hesitate about expanding its existing operations or about creating new investment—that was certainly one of the actions.

But there were other signals as well, not the least of which was the decision of the government to eliminate the private sector, the independent operator, from the delivery of child care. We have seen another reiteration of that very same kind of ideological approach in the government's announcement of last week that the private sector in the delivery of home care will be eliminated to 10% of market share.

Those two actions on their own, and there are many others I could name, provide signals that this government is anti-business and anti-private sector. Its decisions in those areas have been made in an unpredictable way. They have been made on ideology and not on analysis of health outcomes—by example, the case of the home care decision—not on the basis of whether the service can be better delivered in one sector or another, but on the basis simply of ideology and not on the basis of what in fact are the needs of the province.

1730

As well, those decisions have indicated very clearly that the government is prone to making decisions in the absence of expert advice and that it lacks the competence to do so. I want to move on to that in a few minutes as I move into my remarks.

In 1992-93, the revenue projections were out by \$2.7 billion. That very stunning report by the Treasurer provided a major signal of the mismanagement of the fiscal plan to the capital investment community, not only, as I say, on Bay Street but in Tokyo and Munich and London and New York.

There's another trend as well, however, that I find particularly disturbing. I'm not certain this trend has been brought to the floor of the Legislature earlier in this or other debates, but each NDP budget so far has added significant numbers to the operating deficit, to the budgetary requirements of the province. In other words, we are adding to the budgetary requirements not only capital borrowing needs, but we are adding current operating needs, not only to the current deficit but to the long-term debt.

This year, the operating deficit is predicted to be \$6 billion. Last year, it was predicted to be \$8.3 billion. In fact, the operating deficit last year was superseded by \$2.3 billion. In other words, the Treasurer's projections on operating were \$2.3 billion out.

If I can take that operating deficit argument to an understandable level, to indicate why it's a dangerous trend, I'd like to do so. If one owns a home and has a mortgage on it, one mortgages the capital requirements for the home, the borrowing, perhaps some interest involved in it. One does not add the cost of the groceries that one puts on the table in the home to the mortgage that one takes out on the house. In this case, the government is in fact doing that. It's covering the cost of the groceries as it's paying for the cost of the facility that houses those groceries.

I suggest to you, Mr Speaker, that with this policy of the government to continue to borrow and add to our long-term debt significant operating expenditures, the government is borrowing for the papers, the pens and the pencils, the oil and gas for the vehicles, as well as for the schools in which those papers and pens are used and the vehicles in which the gas is placed.

That trend is one that is dangerous. If there is a signal of any competence from the federal government, it is that Michael Wilson in his term of office as Finance minister in fact brought that operating expenditure scenario under control. In the previous government to this, the operating expenditure was brought under control. There was no borrowing done for operating purposes under the last government.

What is happening now is that there are no assets left for a significant portion of the borrowing capacity of the province. I expect the Treasurer would find absolutely nothing wrong with my analysis here, to the member for Middlesex. In fact, he would concur with my analysis of the situation. Last year, the budgetary requirements were \$11 billion; \$8 billion of that money was for operating purposes. In other words, there is no asset left at the end of the borrowing period to cover the borrowing requirements. The money's been spent, it's gone and there is nothing left to show for the expenditure.

I want to bring to the attention of the Legislature some of the ways the government has mispredicted not only in its longer-term predictions with respect to the fiscal plan, but in the management of ongoing and very current issues. To do that, I want to refer to some documents that have been on the table during the social contract discussions and the kinds of decisions that have been made with respect to fiscal and financial management, particularly on the expenditure side of the budget, having already spoken to the revenue side.

We know that doctors in Ontario, through a combination of the expenditure control plan and the social contract plan, will be asked to take a cut of some \$400 million, actually closer to \$500 million, in terms of their activities. That cut is going to be reflected in services that are provided to people.

To illustrate how predictions were made about where those cuts should be, I want to refer to a particular section of the social contract paper. First of all, the

expenditure control paper provided an indication, in the first instance, that ophthalmologists and optometrists would be limited to providing one eye examination per person per year.

Questions were asked by those who are delivering those services, and latterly, some information came forward that was spelled out further in a paper to the physicians, which only went to the physician component of the health care sector. That paper said that the eye code test for physicians would be de-insured and billing criteria for eye tests by optometrists would be tightened; the billing criteria for those would be tightened.

The government anticipated at that time, and it says, "It is anticipated that this will save \$2.1 million in 1993-94." That is the paper, the document, that was put on the table.

We started to ask some questions, as did those who were affected by a decision that was in no way wrought, in no way put forward, in the context of any consultative process.

I give you, by example, what became a later decision, and that is that for optometrists the code under OHIP, called V402, which is the follow-up oculo-visual code, would be eliminated. The projected savings for eliminating that, according to OHIP, are \$3.6 million. Indeed, in the social contract paper, the government hadn't even done its initial calculations of the savings correctly. The calculations of the savings of \$2.1 million were in relationship to the elimination of code A0009, which is the oculo-visual assessment fee for GPs and family practitioners.

Here's another \$3.6 million worth of savings that ought to have been on the table. Why weren't they there? Because they came totally out of the air. When optometrists met with health officials, including those from OHIP, and asked what the savings were that they were required to produce and where those savings would come from, they were told that their billings were approximately \$80 million; 10% of that was approximately \$8 million. The V402 code cost the province \$8 million. Therefore, that code would be eliminated.

Now, the code cannot be eliminated. The reason it cannot be eliminated is simple. First of all, to eliminate that code interferes with the scope of practice of optometrists. Secondly, optometrists are included in Bill 94, which says that they cannot extra bill. So a necessary medical treatment, which the government threw in on the basis of grabbing figures out of the air, cannot be implemented. Where is the competence? Where is the appropriate approach? Where is the analysis? Where is the consultation in this kind of process?

1740

I could give you numerous other examples of such incompetence that were included and that have come

forward very much in the past few weeks. I give you, by example, hospitals, which are being asked to reduce their expenditures by some \$400 million through both the expenditure control and the social contract discussions; 54% of hospital workers work part-time. The government's analysis of those workers who work part-time does not take into account, by example, the nurse who may in fact be on call for four different hospitals.

This could be the case in Hamilton; I know the Minister of Labour, Mr Mackenzie, will attest to this. It certainly is the case in Toronto, in Ottawa, in London and other urban areas where there's no accounting for what the government's targets are, nor how these workers who will be critical workers will ultimately be hit by such incompetent analysis that's being put forward.

Those issues of competence and management of our economic resources are seen not only by those who deliver our services and those who are our so-called partners—in my view, the government wants them to be silent partners here—but those issues are seen and the competence is judged around the world.

The last area I want to go into is the analysis of what is the debt. The government is adding new agencies that will require capital borrowing from our schools, from our municipalities, from water and sewer agencies and so on. I have asked the Treasurer to include the bottom line of the new agency borrowing as part of a consolidated statement of debt of the province in order to ensure that the capital markets will have what is a true and appropriate picture of the borrowing needs of Ontario. The Treasurer has said no, and indeed the capital markets heard that he said no.

The availability and the cost of borrowing that's available to Ontario is totally dependent on the credibility of this government as it moves towards the capital markets and attempts to borrow money there. This government has a long way to go to prove its competence and its credibility to ensure that we'll be able to access those funds at an appropriate interest rate.

I appreciate being able to participate in this debate and look forward to hearing questions and comments.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments? Seeing none, further debate.

Mr Sutherland: I'd just like to make a couple of comments in terms of wrapping up the debate. I want to thank all those who participated.

The only comment I want to make, a general comment, is that we've heard a lot of the opposition members say that this government has mismanaged how it's done things. I want to say that in three years, this government has implemented a lot of management principles that were not in existence for many different ministries and for many different sectors of delivery of public services, whether that be health or other areas,

and I think this government's record can be very proud.

Predicting government revenues in these uncertain times is by no means any science. Many of our predictions are also based on what other levels of government and other professional indicators or professional people who do these types of projections are based on as well, and it's not an exact science when you're in these very, very unstable economic times. I'd like to wrap up the debate with that.

The Acting Speaker: No questions or comments. This is the wrapup of Bill 25.

Mr Sutherland has moved second reading. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Agreed.

I do now leave the Speaker's chair, and the Legislature will be in committee of the whole.

House in committee of the whole.

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS), 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (POMPIERS AUXILIAIRES)

Consideration of Bill 87, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to Volunteer Firefighters / Loi modifiant le Code de la route relativement aux pompiers auxiliaires.

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): In relation to section 1 of the bill, subsections (12.1), (12.2), (12.3) and (12.4) of the Highway Traffic Act, I move—

The Second Deputy Chair (Mr Noble Villeneuve): You are moving the entire bill. You have to move the entire bill and then we will deal with the amendments.

Mrs Fawcett: Just read it? I move Bill 87, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to Volunteer Firefighters.

I move that subsections (12.1) and (12.2) of the Highway Traffic Act, as set out in section 1 of the bill, be struck out and the following substituted:

“Firefighters

“(12.1) On application by a person who meets the requirements of this act and the regulations and who is a firefighter under the Fire Departments Act, the ministry or a person authorized by the ministry may issue to the applicant a sticker, that indicates that the vehicle is registered to or leased by a firefighter, to be attached to the lower left hand corner of the front number plate of any motor vehicle of which the person is the registered owner or lessee.

“Same

“(12.2) For the purposes of this section and subsection 62(33), “firefighter” includes a volunteer or full-time firefighter.

“Same

“(12.3) A person to whom a sticker has been issued under subsection (12.1) shall not display the sticker upon ceasing to be a firefighter under the Fire Departments Act or upon ceasing to meet the requirements prescribed by the regulations.

“Regulations

“(12.4) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations respecting the issuance, replacement and cancellation of a sticker referred to in subsection (12.1).”

The Second Deputy Chair: Mrs Fawcett has moved an amendment to section 1—dispense? Agreed.

Comments from the member for Northumberland?

Mrs Fawcett: Very briefly, I want to congratulate and thank all the members who are supporting this. I also want to put on the record that the changes to the bill have been in consultation with the ministry and the stakeholders, the various representatives of firefighters across Ontario, to include all firefighters in the province's 656 fire departments: men and women who protect us in so many ways and also put their lives on the line.

Mr Speaker, I also have two further amendments, very briefly, regarding the title of the bill.

The Second Deputy Chair: We will deal with your amendments as stated first, and then we'll proceed with your further amendments.

Do we have further discussion on the bill or the amendments?

Is it the pleasure of the House that section 1, as amended, carry? Agreed? Agreed.

Further amendments?

1750

Mrs Fawcett: A further amendment to section 3. I move that section 3 of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

“Short title

“3. The short title of this act is the Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Firefighters), 1993.”

The Second Deputy Chair: Shall section 2 stand as part of the bill known as Bill 87? Agreed? Agreed.

Shall the amendment to section 3, as moved by Mrs Fawcett, carry? Agreed? Agreed.

Shall section 3, as amended, carry? Agreed? Agreed.

Do we have further amendments?

Mrs Fawcett: I move that the long title of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

“An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to Firefighters.”

The Second Deputy Chair: Mrs Fawcett moves that the long title of the bill be struck out—dispense? Agreed? Agreed.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment to

the long title carry? Agreed? Agreed.

Is it the pleasure of the House that Bill 87, as amended, be reported to the House? Agreed? Agreed.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I move that the committee rise and report.

The Second Deputy Chair: Is it the pleasure of the House that the committee rise and report? Agreed? Agreed.

I want to make the committee aware that I now leave the chair of committee of the whole and go back to the Speaker's chair.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The committee of the whole House begs to report one bill with certain amendments and asks for leave to sit again.

Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Orders of the day. The government House leader.

Hon Mr Charlton: I seek the unanimous consent of the House to call the fourth order for third reading.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have the unanimous consent of the House? Agreed? Agreed.

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS), 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (POMPIERS AUXILIAIRES)

Mrs Fawcett moved third reading of Bill 87, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to Volunteer Firefighters / Loi modifiant le Code de la route relativement aux pompiers auxiliaires.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the honourable member have any comments on third reading?

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I'd like once again to thank everyone. I see that the former Minister of Transportation, who certainly did support this, is in the House. I want to thank all members of the House who did support this bill.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have further participation?

Is it the pleasure of the House that Bill 87, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to Firefighters, carry for third reading? Agreed? Agreed.

I do now resolve that the bill pass as in the motion. Orders of the day.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): It being almost 6 of the clock, it was not my intention to call any further business but simply to read the business statement for next week.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable House leader will please provide us with information regarding next week.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Pursuant to standing order 55, I would like to announce the business for the coming week.

On Monday, July 12, we will give third reading to the Ontario Loan Act, Bill 25, followed by the adjourned second reading debate of the Employment Equity Act, Bill 79.

The remainder of the week's business will be announced, and hopefully we'll be having some discussions about that on Monday morning.

On the morning of Thursday, July 15, during private members' public business, we will consider ballot item 21, a resolution standing in the name of Mr Villeneuve, and ballot item number 22, second reading of Bill 53, standing in the name of Mr Kormos.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): We are slightly ahead of schedule. It is not quite 6 of the clock. The member for Eglinton has requested a late show with the Minister of Education. Pursuant to standing order 34, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made. The member for Eglinton has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given recently by the Minister of Education. The member for Eglinton now has up to five minutes to debate the matter and the minister then has five minutes in response.

JOBS ONTARIO TRAINING FUND

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): Mr Speaker, \$640,000 of the taxpayers' money has gone missing from a Jobs Ontario Training fund broker in Brantford, and while the minister claims there's no problem because the missing money was discovered by a member of the Jobs Ontario staff, he refuses to answer any questions with meaningful detail about what steps he has taken and is taking to protect the taxpayers' money.

While the minister tries to delude us that this is just an isolated incident, consider this: The \$640,000 loss was discovered after the first monitoring visit by Jobs Ontario to a broker and has resulted in the very first audit of a Jobs Ontario broker.

The signs were all there in April. A branch office had been closed, a member of the senior management left suddenly, nine employees were abruptly let go, but it took the minister until June to call in the OPP.

Now, to find the money which has been missing for five months, the only course left to the OPP is to conduct a forensic audit: five months, \$640,000, plus the cost of the Jobs Ontario audit, the ministry's internal audit and the OPP investigation.

It all begs one question, why was the minister so naive? Any member of the public would tell the minister that he should have had proper safeguards in place to protect the taxpayers' money. But the minister was too busy getting an NDP public relations exercise under

way to be concerned with small details such as where the money went.

Meanwhile, members of the general public, small business owners and the press have been calling my office to reveal other problem areas. For instance, Jobs Ontario is after an employer in Niagara who took \$25,000 but did no training. In another case, there are allegations people are being charged a registration fee. That was not part of what they announced.

Numerous problems are cropping up with employers and brokers taking advantage of the government's offer for cash with no strings or built-in audit mechanisms attached: Waterloo, Toronto, Niagara and Ottawa-Carleton, the list grows daily.

The people of Ontario will take note for 16 months every minister of this government has stood in this place and crowed about numbers of positions created by Jobs Ontario. But recently and suspiciously, all we've had is silence. We're left to ask the question, "Why?"

Could it be that the NDP was in such a hurry to cobble together any type of jobs program that it didn't ensure the proper accountability mechanisms were in place? Is it because Jobs Ontario knows that there are many duplicates on the computer system and it's so afraid their numbers would be reduced that it's refusing to cull the system to remove these duplicates? Could it also be that the number of positions created and jobs filled aren't keeping up with the government's lofty targets? Why is the Rae government suddenly so silent about Jobs Ontario Training? The answer is all of the above. This is what my sources are telling me.

As I've said to this minister in this House on many occasions, he and his colleagues can't even get their own public relations numbers straight. Do they really have a handle on how many jobs they've created, jobs, I might add, that are only short-term and not highly skilled?

1800

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): There will be another full-page ad. That's what's going to happen.

Ms Poole: Absolutely. My colleague says, "Another full-page ad," and that's exactly what they will do. When in doubt, they pour the money into public relations, into advertising, rather than getting the job done.

I call upon this minister to do the right thing: Admit that Jobs Ontario Training is an expensive public relations scam and give it up. Cancel the program. Call in the Provincial Auditor before it's too late and bring in a meaningful program to create real jobs, not NDP public relations.

Jobs NDP will go down in history as the biggest waste of taxpayers' money. While this minister and this government are asking the people of Ontario all to make sacrifices, why doesn't this government make a sacrifice? Why don't you stop wasting the taxpayers' money

on your pet public relations scam, Jobs Ontario Training, and why don't you bring in a meaningful program that will create real jobs that the people of this province so desperately need?

I'd like some answers to my questions and I'm hoping today that the minister will give me those answers.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The Minister of Education has up to five minutes in response.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): First of all, I find it quite unacceptable that the member started off her comments referring specifically to a case that she knows is under the investigation of the OPP directly in contravention to the ruling that the Speaker made in the House a few weeks ago.

When the Leader of the Opposition asked a question about this particular program, she deliberately did not ask a question about the Brantford case and made it clear that she wasn't doing that because she knew the OPP were investigating. I find it highly irresponsible and a direct contravention to the ruling the Speaker gave a couple of weeks ago in the House. The OPP are investigating and the member knows that.

I want to just run through a couple of points that I think are important for the member to understand, and for the members of the Legislature to understand. With every question that the Liberal Party has asked about the Jobs Ontario Training program, it has turned out that it has been completely wrong in the facts it has tried to present in the House. I want to go back to some of them we've documented.

On April 15, the Leader of the Opposition asked a question on Jobs Ontario Training. She said:

"Ross Pope and Co of Kirkland Lake applied for a training subsidy under your training scheme. A total of 43 pages of correspondence, of faxes, of documentation were sent and all of this resulted in a subsidy of \$386."

The Leader of the Opposition was completely wrong. In fact, when we looked into this particular case, this company hadn't even participated in the Jobs Ontario Training program. This person applied for a subsidy under the Ontario skills financial incentive program and received considerably more than \$386.

On April 26, the Leader of the Opposition stated, and the member just repeated, that the program was creating low-skilled jobs which do not require training. I want to outline for the members of the Legislature the placements that have taken place. Some 10% of the jobs are in the managerial and professional field; 30% are in the highly skilled trades and technical occupations; 43% are in the semi-skilled jobs requiring secondary education, up to two years of experience or specialized training; and only 10% of the jobs filled are in the lowest-skilled level. They're wrong again.

On April 29, the member who raised the question here tonight alleged that the buttons in the promotion program had been printed in Taiwan. We then investigated and reported correctly to the House that the member was wrong again. The buttons were printed here in Ontario, in Canada.

I don't think the member has a heck of a lot of credibility when she makes silly statements like she has about the program and the accountability that it has within the Ministry of Education.

I will just finish by saying that on the case of accountability and financial accountability, the member knows that the on particular case that has been referred to, specifically the way that was picked up was by our regular auditing and visiting of the Jobs Ontario brokers across the province. We picked it up. This didn't just fall upon the public through some investigation that the member carried out. Because this program is being closely followed, because there are reports that are constantly being turned in to the Minister of Education from each of the brokers, because we get out on a regular basis and visit the brokers, we discovered the problem in this particular agency.

When the problem was discovered, it was brought to my attention. We then took immediate action. We moved in a supervisor from the Ministry of Education and Training to take over control of the broker so that the jobs and the function that they were carrying out would not be lost, but the taxpayers would be protected. When material was put together and the audit was completed, the material was then all sent to the Ontario Provincial Police.

Considering the number of jobs—28,000 jobs have now been created under this program; nearly 15,000 people had been placed in those jobs,—considering the number of brokers that exist right across this province, considering the fact that there are thousands and thou-

sands of people involved, this program has an excellent record in this province. I congratulate the ministry and the people who are working in this program for keeping very good track of taxpayers' dollars, at the same time creating thousands of jobs for social assistance recipients so that they can participate in Ontario's economy.

This isn't a program that should be criticized; this is a program that should be praised, as it is by thousands of people in the private sector from one end of Ontario to the other end.

The Acting Speaker: I wish to thank both the Minister of Education and the honourable member for Eglinton for their participation in this debate.

ROYAL ASSENT

SANCTION ROYALE

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in his office.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): The following is the title of the bill to which His Honour did assent:

Bill 48, An Act to encourage negotiated settlements in the public sector to preserve jobs and services while managing reductions in expenditures and to provide for certain matters related to the Government's expenditure reduction program / Loi visant à favoriser la négociation d'accords dans le secteur public de façon à protéger les emplois et les services tout en réduisant les dépenses et traitant de certaines questions relatives au programme de réduction des dépenses du gouvernement.

The Acting Speaker: It being past 6 of the clock and there being no further matter to be debated, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried. The Legislature will resume on Monday, July 12, at 1:30 pm.

The House adjourned at 1808.

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No. 46



N° 46

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Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 12 July 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 12 juillet 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



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Monday 12 July 1993

The House met at 1331.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

GO BUS SERVICE

Mr Charles Beer (York North): Does this government care about rural and small-town Ontario? Recent actions suggest not.

The commuters in King township are losing their only bus service, route 6565, which links Newmarket, King City and Maple to Yorkdale. In addition, the residents of Nobleton are also seeing their service eliminated.

The residents who use these services include, as King township council was told last month, students, seniors, the physically impaired and workers. There is simply no alternative for the approximately 150 riders who use this service daily.

The residents who depend on this service have made some specific recommendations on how the service could be kept, even if at a reduced rate. They have proposed to the Minister of Transportation and to GO Transit innovative ways of avoiding the straight elimination of all services. As one confused and frustrated GO bus rider put it, "First, the NDP told our area, 'You're going to have a megadump,' and now they're saying, 'There will no be more GO buses.'"

I ask the minister to accept King township's motion whereby two regular return trips would be maintained for route 6565 and thereby ensure that commuters could get to and from work. The time is now and the time is for action.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): The Workplace Health and Safety Agency is currently in the process of consolidating Ontario's 12 health and safety delivery organizations.

I would like to indicate to the Minister of Labour and the government that there is considerable concern among health care providers about the absorption of the Care-Givers of Ontario Safety and Health Association by the Workers' Health and Safety Centre. Many of these health care providers have written to indicate their very serious concerns about the elimination of sector-specific programming for health and safety programs. Sector-specific programming is important to health care employees because of the unique conditions in their work setting.

There is also concern that this consolidation is occurring without adequate consultation with the incorporated board of the Care-Givers of Ontario Safety and Health Association. This is an extremely important issue, and this government must take the time to secure

the support and cooperation of all those affected by this change.

I would urge the Minister of Labour to ensure that before the process of consolidating Ontario's health and safety delivery organization is allowed to continue, there is an appropriate period of meaningful consultation during which the very legitimate concerns of all of the parties are fully addressed.

OSTEOPOROSIS

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): Today I rise in the House to offer recognition to a special group working very hard to raise the awareness for fighting against osteoporosis. One out of four older women suffers from this affliction, and that makes it the most common disease experienced by older women.

It was my distinct pleasure last Thursday evening to meet Eleanor Mills at an event designed to assist in the battle against osteoporosis. Eleanor Mills is a spirited senior who is suffering from this debilitating bone disorder. She is also leading a cross-Canada walk to raise the awareness of osteoporosis.

I would encourage all those listening to educate themselves on this very important issue, and if you spot Eleanor or any of the other members of the "Bony Express," as they call themselves, walking through your town, please take the time to offer them whatever support you can.

You might have noticed that I'm wearing a T-shirt today. I mean no disrespect to the Legislature or to this House, but it's merely a response to a challenge that was put forward to me last Thursday by Eleanor to help publicize the event and the campaign whenever possible. If anybody out there, my constituents or other constituents, members of the House, happen to go for a walk and see her walking, I ask them to talk to her and ask her about her friend Fred.

BRUCE CROZIER

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I rise today to ask when this government will find the courage to call the by-election in the riding of Essex South.

As you will know, I am the newest member of the Liberal caucus and I look forward to being replaced as the rookie when the voters of Essex South get a chance to elect a new member, who I am sure will be Bruce Crozier. I just hope that he, unlike me, will not have to wait a full six months before the Premier has the courage to face the electorate. Mind you, I can appreciate the Premier's fear. After all, with a candidate of the quality of Bruce Crozier, the mayor of Leamington, running as a Liberal, another by-election lost for this government is almost inevitable.

Bruce Crozier will be a great representative for Essex

South at Queen's Park. His record of public and community service is second to none. He was elected mayor of Leamington in 1988 and re-elected by acclamation in 1992. He has served on various Leamington boards: the public utilities commission, the police services board, the recreation committee, the arena board and the union water system local advisory board.

Bruce and his wife and two kids are dedicated to the community. Bruce has a lifelong commitment to the area, including the Kinsmen Club, the Canadian Red Cross, the Leamington Chamber of Commerce and the Royal Canadian Legion. This kind of commitment, with Bruce's fresh ideas, is virtually unbeatable.

Although the NDP came close in 1990, we all know that won't be true this time. This election, I think, will be a true test of the Tory support in this province, which is why I know that the newest member of the Legislature will be Bruce Crozier and I look forward to welcoming him here as soon as possible.

MUNICIPAL ELECTRICAL UTILITIES

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): Ontario residents should be made aware of the fact that as of August 1, when the social contract takes effect, each time they turn on an electric light they will be paying an additional tax to Bob Rae and the government of Ontario.

The social contract legislation demands that every municipal electrical commission in Ontario pay 5% of its salary budget to the province of Ontario to address the projected 1993 \$17-billion deficit caused by mismanagement. Never before in the history of this province has the electrical consumer been required to subsidize the day-to-day running of the province in such a fashion.

The Minister of Finance has indicated that the cuts forced on the municipal electrical utilities result from the provisions of the social contract. Consequently, the money received should flow to the provincial government, the author of the social contract. In reality, the main provisions—a wage freeze, which has already been introduced by most utilities, a pause day halfway through the fiscal year and against the critical service—will be of limited use to the municipalities. Keep in mind that our local electrical commissions are not funded by the province of Ontario.

Local municipal electrical utilities have served this province well through their effective and efficient operations. The customers of these utilities are being unfairly treated by being required to subsidize the day-to-day operations of the province of Ontario—just one more way this government has turned you off of turning on.

1340

CECIL INSLEY

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): Today I would like to share some

sad news with the members of the Legislature and those people who are watching. It's news about the passing of one Cecil Insley, a well-known resident in Wellington, Ontario.

Cecil was a volunteer extraordinaire and a community activist. For many years he was a commercial fisherman and he traded that in to become a charter boat operator. Indeed, it was just this past Saturday while he was exercising a charter on Lake Ontario that he suddenly died.

He was a member of the village of Wellington council from 1970 to 1972 inclusive. He was a volunteer fireman for eight years and was the Wellington fire chief from 1977 to 1979. He was recently active with the Royal Canadian Legion, formed a new seniors' group in Wellington and was also active in the boaters' association.

I talked with Cecil only on July 1, Canada Day, when he was a parade marshal—the parade marshal for Canada Day and Santa Claus parades in the village of Wellington for many years. He was the recent recipient of a Canada 125 medal. He received that medal obviously because of his extreme sense of community and the voluntarism that he showed for his community.

I want to offer my most sincere condolence to his wife, Fran, to his family and friends. I regret that I'll be unable to attend his funeral tomorrow in Wellington and I just wanted to share this most unfortunate news with the members of this Legislative Assembly.

DAY CARE

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Last week the region of Peel was forced to cancel its family day care program. This program has served families in Peel region for 18 years and provided 932 much-needed spaces. The region was forced to cut this service to meet the target cuts the Treasurer assigned in his expenditure control plan.

I'm pleased to hear that the minister has made a commitment that the province will continue funding its share of this program and that a committee of regional councillors, staff, providers and parents has been struck to assist the ministry with a smooth transition. I hope the ministry will commit to working with this group.

What puzzles me in all of this is why the minister refused to meet with the region in the first place. As soon as regional officials realized that their only option was to cut their day care program, they asked for a meeting with the minister to work out a solution. The minister refused to meet with them. He refused in a telephone call to even consider the region's proposal to salvage the program.

Now, in the 11th hour, the minister has stepped in with a solution. I have to wonder why the minister, whose government boasts about its broad consultation process, could not have met with them earlier.

Emil Kolb, chairman of the region of Peel, says he is "disappointed and frustrated by the lack of awareness the minister has shown regarding the options his government has left us."

I would urge the minister to work with the committee the region of Peel has established to ensure the transition of these much-needed day care spaces.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): While I and my constituents are in favour of fiscal restraint, I must point out that the social contract, as given third reading, is neither fair nor workable and it will not bring about real cost savings over the long term.

The Lanark County Board of Education has told me that it cannot implement Bill 48 because 20.4% of its employees are earning under \$30,000. The board also reports that it will face a 24% increase in catch-up wage costs at the end of the Bill 48 period.

The county of Lanark has close to 50% of its employees earning under \$30,000. Their only option now is to shut down the government offices in order to make up for that shortfall. Both these cases show that this government has shifted the entire burden upon its partners without leaving any room to manoeuvre.

The PC Party offered this government 29 amendments designed to solve these problems. They were based upon the best advice of the medical profession, the school boards, the municipalities and other stakeholders. Now that the government and the official opposition have rejected these amendments, I implore the government to give these groups specific direction as to how they can reach your goals.

SIR WILLIAM OSLER AWARDS

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Sir William Osler awards, which honour the most outstanding essays by students in grades 7 and 8. The 1993 recipients are Dundas District Public School's Nikki Bodden and Daraius Gandevia. Their essays focused on the history of their home town of Dundas and their efforts have won them special recognition.

Daraius's essay was entitled *Travelling Through Dundas History* and Nikki's was called *The History of the Town of Dundas*. The focus of Daraius's essay was on local history in the 1800s and early 1900s. He spoke of the first explorers and settlers in Dundas and focused on some of the historical sites.

His research uncovered some interesting information on the great train disaster that occurred early in the town's history. It was about a train that was crossing the Desjardins canal when some of its wheels slid off the tracks. All the cars except one plummeted into the canal and almost everyone perished.

During Nikki's research, she found that Dundas was once a more thriving centre than Hamilton, with sup-

plies coming by way of the Desjardins canal. She also learned that the people who built the canal did not live to see it completed. She also spoke of the dreaded incurable smallpox, which was a very common disease back then.

It is through this project that both Nikki and Daraius have realized the importance of the valley town's historical buildings. As Nikki said: "They have so much meaning. I don't think people know what they're destroying. It's part of our history." I hope the local decision-makers are listening, Nikki.

I ask the members of this Legislature to join me in congratulating Nikki Bodden and Daraius Gandevia as this year's winners of the Sir William Osler awards.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

JOBS ONTARIO COMMUNITY ACTION

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I rise today to provide an update on Jobs Ontario Community Action.

As I told the House last month, this initiative aims to give local communities the resources and tools they need to undertake economic renewal initiatives. Jobs Ontario Community Action will give communities greater control of their own economic development. It will support local economic development in a way that encourages community-wide participation and inclusiveness in economic planning and development.

It will support communities of interest so that they will be better prepared to participate in the economic, social and cultural life of the broader community. For example, there will be a guaranteed minimum allocation for projects from the aboriginal community. We have begun negotiations with aboriginal leaders on decision-making arrangements that will honour and respect our commitment to native self-government.

As you may know, Jobs Ontario Community Action has three major components: community financing, community capital and community development.

Community financing provides the opportunities for communities to raise the money from local investors to encourage loans and equity investments in small and medium-sized businesses by establishing community loan funds and community investment share corporations. Through this component, we will provide loan and equity guarantees for loan and equity capital invested in small and medium-sized businesses.

Bill 40 will also give municipalities the opportunity to use more creative and flexible ways of financing community projects. My colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Ed Philip, introduced the legislation to establish these new financing mechanisms on June 2.

Community Action's second component, community capital, supports capital projects which contribute to economic growth in the community. When I addressed

the House last month, I announced that we would deal with the immediate demand for capital funds, respond to the initiative shown by many communities and start creating jobs right away by allocating up to \$31 million to fund capital projects that could begin this summer.

The response to this phase of the program has been overwhelming and I'm pleased to announce today that the first projects have been approved. Funding has been approved for the D.A. Gillies Building in Arnprior, the Lions Park Recreation Complex in Brantford, the Peterborough YMCA, the Windsor Jewish Community Centre and the Waterworks Pumphouse in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Ontario government support for these projects will result in more than \$1 million in total investment in these communities.

The \$195,000 that will be provided to the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake will help fund the restoration of the historic Waterworks Pumphouse to create a visual arts centre. This project combines economic benefits with the preservation of Ontario's cultural heritage. I am sure that the renovated site will become another popular tourist attraction.

Additional details on these projects are being released locally today. Further approvals will be announced in the coming weeks.

The program's third component, community development, supports a wide range of activities to help communities with their economic development activities. I would also like to provide the House with more details on this component today.

Funding is available in several areas: community vision, priority setting and action plans; building and strengthening community organizations; special research and marketing activities; and community economic development projects or events.

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Community development would support the kind of project undertaken, for example, by communities in the Georgian Bay area with their Georgian Bay '94 Marine Heritage Festival. The festival is a coordinating theme for marine heritage events along the Georgian Bay shoreline from June to September 1994. It will involve some 45 Georgian Bay communities and include hundreds of marine heritage events and activities that will promote the area as a key tourist destination.

Ontario government support of \$100,000 will lever over four times that amount in local funding.

More importantly, this exercise got these communities to cooperate. Together they examined such issues as environmental implications and long-term job creation, and together they developed viable solutions that were acceptable to the entire community.

For community development projects under Jobs Ontario Community Action, provincial support will be available up to one third of the cost of a project with a

\$300,000 maximum size of any project. In smaller communities, support would be available up to 50% of the project cost. Communities may contribute in kind for their share.

To access the three components of Jobs Ontario Community Action, communities may write or phone their local government office to discuss their economic development ideas. A 1-800 number has also been set up for people who are uncertain of where to find more information on the program.

After initial contact, a follow-up visit with a staff person will be scheduled to discuss the application process.

Once a community has submitted its application, it will be reviewed by regional teams according to the level of community support for both the project and the process to determine priorities within the community.

This program does not have a formal deadline. Applications for support will be dealt with on an ongoing basis.

The process will ensure that projects reflect a community's priorities and that the process has involved all community members. As part of the review process, the local MPP will be consulted.

Projects will also be evaluated according to economic development opportunity including the impact on local investment, job creation and training. Again, projects must reflect a community's priorities.

Before now, different ministries had economic development programs targeted at different projects, activities and communities. This forced communities to chase grant money. They would pitch their projects to whatever program and whatever ministry looked most promising.

A lot of good projects didn't get the funding they deserved because there wasn't always a grant program for every kind of project in a community. Jobs Ontario Community Action will let communities tell us which projects are the priorities they want funded.

We are moving away from ministries determining the priority of capital funding to communities determining their priorities and developing plans to achieve them.

We are also moving away from an area in which certain priorities may have been passed over by a set of narrow interests to a new era where planning is inclusive of the broader community, where decisions reflect careful consideration of economic, social and environmental issues, and where the capacity of communities for self-determination is being strengthened through leadership training and strategic planning.

We are addressing the fact that some communities lack the skills required to drive local change by providing leadership skills based on the needs identified by communities.

We will address the lack of financing mechanisms for community priorities through new mechanisms to lever local financing: community shares and community loans.

Finally, we are moving away from limited coordination between ministries to a process where the right players will be brought to the table quickly. Programs will be coordinated across government.

Jobs Ontario Community Action will support building a strong foundation for long-term community growth and jobs. It will foster self-reliance in communities, allowing for sustainable economic growth through local planning and investment in economic activity.

Making this program work effectively and ensuring broad participation will be a challenge for all of us, and I hope you will join me in this effort and take up the challenge. I'd like to invite everyone here to work with us to get their communities involved.

This afternoon I'm releasing the material that explains the Jobs Ontario Community Action initiative and its components in more detail, as well as the application forms.

These materials and other supports are available to all MPPs and their communities. I'd like to invite all MPPs to schedule meetings with community groups in their ridings to help get the program off to a good start. In fact, the government will provide staff and other resources. MPPs will be asked to supply names of interested groups and individuals who should be invited.

My ministry is ready to begin scheduling meetings and to help out with the logistics. A contact person is listed in the kits you will receive this afternoon.

This is our opportunity to ensure that our communities get involved in Jobs Ontario Community Action. It's our task to ensure that our communities take full advantage of the tools that we have created for them. We need everyone involved in the effort to renew and rebuild Ontario's economy.

I ask all of my colleagues to join us as we work to get this province back to work.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE COLLEGES COLLÈGES DE LANGUE FRANÇAISE

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): Last Friday, I made an important announcement in Sudbury for the Franco-Ontarian community.

Francophone participation at the post-secondary level, and especially in colleges, is still low compared to that of non-francophones. A series of public consultations on French-language college education conducted by the Bourdeau commission in 1990 indicated that the creation of additional French-language colleges can help reverse this situation. In fact, there has been a noticeable increase in francophone enrolment in the east since the opening of the first French-language college, la Cité collégiale, three years ago.

This government is following through on its commitment to the Franco-Ontarian community to enhance French-language post-secondary education. We will create two new French-language colleges of applied arts and technology in the province, one in northern Ontario and one in central-southwestern Ontario. The two new colleges are scheduled to open in September 1995.

The college in the north will have one main campus located in the Sudbury area and satellite campuses in various communities throughout northern Ontario. We expect the enrolment at the college to be 2,450 within five years of its opening.

The college in the central-southwest will be based on a college without walls concept with an administrative facility in the region. The college will rely on alternative delivery modes, including distance education technologies. We expect enrolment at the college in the south to be 400 within five years of opening.

Both of the new French-language colleges will have the exclusive mandate to provide French-language, post-secondary education and skills programs in their region. Each college will be governed by a French-speaking board of governors. The board of governors will be appointed by the Ontario Council of Regents and their membership will be announced this fall.

We believe that a French-language college system will ensure that Franco-Ontarians have access to high-quality college education and skills training, and as proven by la Cité collégiale, it will encourage many more francophones to get the skills they need to participate in Ontario's workforce.

As part of this French-language initiative, we will also build a permanent campus in Ottawa for la Cité collégiale. Since its opening, la Cité has been in leased facilities in Ottawa. The permanent campus will allow la Cité to accommodate up to 3,500 students.

To go ahead with this initiative, we had to get the federal government to share the costs. Last year, provincial and federal officials reached a tentative agreement that our cabinet approved immediately. It took a year for the federal government to make a decision, and then it reduced its contribution in new funding by one half. We had to find a way to make up the difference while keeping costs in line because we are committed to increasing access to post-secondary education for the francophone population throughout the province.

This government will contribute \$120.7 million to this initiative over a multi-year period.

Investing in training is key to the economic recovery of the province. This government is giving Franco-Ontarians the institutions they need to invest in their future and study in their own language as part of the process of lifelong learning. A French-language college system will benefit not only the Franco-Ontarian community but the whole province.

1400

Mr Charles Beer (York North): I rise to respond to the statement by the Minister of Education and Training and to say that we welcome the minister's statement today and his statement in Sudbury on Friday.

I think the key point the minister has made is the one that relates training and community colleges and their rôle in training, and particularly for the francophone community. There's no question that the really overwhelming success of la Cité collégiale in Ottawa has demonstrated so clearly how important these institutions are for the francophone community, and as the minister has said, they benefit not only the Franco-Ontarian community but our province and the country as a whole.

Je pense qu'il y a plusieurs initiatives que le Ministre vient d'annoncer et qu'il est important de souligner l'importance de ce que le gouvernement est en train de faire : d'abord, de remarquer clairement que le succès de la Cité collégiale d'Ottawa a bien démontré le besoin pour ces deux autres collèges. Si on aurait voulu peut-être que cette décision ait été prise il y a un an, on comprendra les difficultés dans les négociations avec le gouvernement fédéral. Mais la chose importante, c'est que d'abord à Sudbury, il y aura maintenant un collège semblable au collège d'Ottawa. Puis, pour le collège dans le sud, l'option que le gouvernement a choisie, où on ne va pas avoir un seul site mais en effet un collège qui va être plus ouvert, ça a probablement du bon sens et ça va permettre à un plus grand nombre de francophones dans le sud et dans le sud-ouest de participer à un niveau collégial.

Donc, quand on regarde le problème du financement, on espère bien que le gouvernement pourra en effet assurer les fonds pour leur permettre le collège de Sudbury et aussi le site à Ottawa, où vraiment la Cité collégiale a maintenant besoin de son propre site. Avec tous les étudiants qu'on accueille, on a besoin maintenant de changer de place et d'assurer l'avenir de la Cité collégiale.

Donc, nous souhaitons tout le succès aux francophones dans ces trois projets, et je pense que ça va être vraiment un atout pour toute la population de la province.

JOBS ONTARIO COMMUNITY ACTION

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): I'd like to respond to the minister's statement and wish her well in her endeavours, but I have some concerns. If the first part of their initiative is any indication of how this program is going, I really feel there may be some problems.

In her community capital report, the mandate really is to contribute to economic growth in the community. The minister has announced five projects, one of them in Windsor. I think all of these projects are worthy but hardly under the category of economic growth. She's

going to be providing a new sound and lighting system and a new curtain in a community centre. As I say, I'm sure the community centre will welcome that particular investment; it hardly will contribute to economic growth in that community.

There are others just like it. In Peterborough, they're providing an upgrade of the pool circulation equipment and plumbing. That will probably bring some economic growth to the local plumber but, again, I don't see it as being an economic stimulus for the city of Peterborough. There's a new roof going on in Arnprior; that, again, will give a roofer some business.

It would seem to me that the initiative of this program was to help communities help themselves to become economically viable. It doesn't seem to me that these projects and projects like that, which traditionally have been funded by the Ontario Lottery Corp, are going to create a new program just by giving them a new name.

The other concern I have is that the government participation is in a minority position. They're going to be providing one third of the funding, or half for smaller communities, and expecting to have control over how that works.

In her statement, the minister talks about how she's going to coordinate all of these things; that she's going to get everybody involved. It would seem to me that in order to do that you're going to have to have a greater level of funding. Otherwise, anyone would say: "You're a minority player. Why should you be telling us how we should be investing the bulk of our money?"

So I have some concerns. I think if it can work, it's great. But the minister herself, in her statement, says, "Making this program work effectively and ensuring broad participation will be a challenge for all of us." I submit that it's going to be one heck of a challenge.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Let me be perfectly clear: This statement is nothing but a fuzzy, do-good statement which will allow the socialists to pretend they are doing something constructive. That's all it is.

I look on page 1, where they say they are going to, through Bill 40, "give municipalities the opportunity to use more creative and flexible ways of financing community projects." This at the same time they have cut \$275 million from municipalities for their expenditure control program. On the one hand, they say they're spending money; on the other hand, they're cutting more than they are putting into the economy.

They're spending \$100 million at a time when they took \$2 billion of taxes out of the pockets of consumers in this province. That one tax increase alone will kill about 50,000 jobs in Ontario; 50,000 jobs will be lost. With this announcement, \$100 million, they say they're going to create jobs. It's interesting that there are no job

figures in here, because I don't think the minister knows.

At the same time, after last week, we are laying off nurses and teachers, rolling back salaries of municipal employees, and what are we going to be doing in this government? We're going to fix the roofs at hockey rinks across the province of Ontario.

I hope some of the people can call in on the toll-free line. Maybe some of the teachers can call in to access some of the money to open a new school to teach some of the kids, or maybe some of the new nurses who are going to be laid off as a result of the actions last week can call in and open up a new health clinic. On the one hand, they are laying off teachers, nurses, they are cutting back, and on the other hand they're saying, "We're spending money."

Quite frankly, the small business sector is the only sector creating jobs, it is not the public sector. When you look at what small business believes are the big impediments, it is the total tax burden, and there's nothing done by this government to deal with that; government regulation and paperwork, and there's nothing done to deal with that; the provincial labour laws. It's interesting that they call this Bill 40. Your Bill 40 of a year ago killed more jobs than this will ever create. They go on to name the cost of municipal government, workers' compensation, then they get down to number 6. The sixth small business impediment is availability of financing, and this government thinks it's going to solve it.

The problem in this province, I say to the Premier and this minister, is that you're overtaxing, you're overspending, you're overgoverning, you're over-regulating, you're destroying jobs. They've asked for MPPs' help. I tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to work to help to defeat this government. That will do more for the economy than anything else I could possibly do.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE COLLEGES

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I'm very surprised at the timing and the content of this announcement today. At a time when the government is speaking about fiscal restraint, it seems to be indicating that it's going to be spending yet more money.

On June 24, the Minister of Education indicated to the Ontario Public School Boards' Association that:

"Ontario will have to run its education system with fewer school boards that cooperate more effectively with one another. Over the next 10 years we're going to have to move to fewer administrative structures and school boards."

He also told school boards, public, Catholic and francophone, to take even bigger steps to share services, including staff.

"If we are to maintain and improve the quality of the

system, a whole different approach has to be taken."

In light of the statements that were made by Mr Cooke on June 25 to OPSBA, I'm really surprised that this announcement is being made at this time, when we're talking about fiscal restraint, when we're talking about the need for greater cooperation, when we're talking about the need to put a moratorium on programs and freeze program expenditures.

We also have here a social contract which has cut wages by \$170 million for colleges and universities. Indeed, when you combine that with the expenditure control plan measures, it's going to result in a cut of 7.4% for each sector.

This is going to result in fewer places in this province for students who are desperately seeking access to our colleges and universities. This government cuts, on the one hand, takes money away from the colleges, yet it's going to spend money to create new college spaces. It's absolutely contradictory.

Why are you not urging that there be cooperation between the anglophone and the francophone communities, as you've encouraged the school boards to do, and why do we not operate the systems cooperatively under one administrative system? If we're going to combine school boards, why don't we do the same with the community college system and save some money rather than continue to spend?

1410

ORAL QUESTIONS

PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a question for the Premier. Mr Premier, would you inform the House whether you will be attending the cabinet meeting on Wednesday of this week and whether it is your intention to be in the Legislature this week?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): My recollection of my schedule is that I'm here today, away from the House tomorrow afternoon because I'm going to be in Minden and Lindsay, I will be back on Wednesday and I'll be here on Thursday.

Mr Bradley: My supplementary will deal with what you might be talking about during the time you are in the cabinet meeting and the times you are in the House. The question relates to the threats you are issuing, through your various members, to members of the House that if they don't comply meekly with the legislative agenda you have, somehow you're going to bring in draconian new rules—even though last June you already brought in rules that limit the time a member may speak—that empower your ministers to determine unilaterally the amount of time to be allocated to debate, that reduce the number of days the Legislative Assembly would normally be in session and which diminish the role of the neutral, elected Speaker.

In view of the fact that the people of the province of

Ontario are asking virtually everybody if they will place in the hands of the elected representatives most of the power to deal with legislation and policy, in view of the fact that there's a widespread feeling in the province that that should be the case, why are you now contemplating new rules which will further concentrate the power of governing into the hands of appointed people in your office and the senior positions in the civil service?

Hon Mr Rae: If I'd known, when the member asked me a question about where I'm going to be on Wednesday, that he really wants to talk about the question of the rules, of course I would have referred it. But I would say to him directly, it's my understanding—

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): No dodging.

Hon Mr Rae: I welcome the return of the member for York Centre. It's a delight to have him here on this occasion as on the other occasions when he's here.

I would simply say to the member for St Catharines that it's my understanding that, as is frequently the case at this time of year, there are discussions among House leaders about the remaining House business. I would think it wouldn't be unreasonable for all of us to expect that at some point during the summer we might have a bit of a break to spend some time with our families, that that's not an unreasonable approach—and with our constituents. Of course we're all glad to work here and glad to stay right through, but I think it might be common parliamentary practice for there to be, at some point, an adjournment after there's been a consideration of the business of the House. Those discussions are under way now between and among the House leaders, and above and beyond that, I have nothing to say.

Mr Bradley: It's very likely, of course, that the House would not be in session at this time if the Premier hadn't in fact insisted that the House be out of session from December 10, 1992, to April 13, 1993.

My question to the Premier is this: Since I think we can judge governments and people on the way they act when nobody is looking, when there is not the glare of publicity on us, when we're not in the middle of the holidays of the summer, when we don't have a circumstance where editors of people who work as reporters in this Legislature would be reluctant to include within their stories so-called in-House issues such as government rules, would the Premier not agree with me, as a former defender of civil rights, as a former defender of the rights of parliamentarians to deal adequately with legislation before the House, that he should abandon any initiative to introduce even more draconian rules which will restrict the rights of the opposition and other members to deal appropriately with legislation?

When he's doing so, would he also guarantee to the House that at the end of this particular session he will

not insist upon the removal of the member for Victoria-Haliburton from the position of assistant deputy Chair of the committee of the whole because he has rendered independent judgements and because he's been a thorn in the side of the Premier over the past several months?

Hon Mr Rae: I feel I must respond to the preliminary comments made by the member for St Catharines.

I think that a largely defenceless media deserves occasionally the support of all of us in public life, given the vigilance that they perform summer, fall, winter and spring, morning, noon and night. For a member with the experience of the member for St Catharines to launch such a vicious attack on the vigilance of the media surprises me deeply. It's quite unfair, because after all, they can hardly respond, they hardly have the capacity and means to respond. And given the very favourable coverage which the member received while he was in government, I'm surprised that he would stoop to the level of attacking the provincial media at this particular point in our political life.

Mr Bradley: If only the television cameras in this House were allowed to go back to the Premier now while he smiles, having well kept a straight face with that particular non-answer to my question.

GAMBLING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a second question to the Premier. This question deals with his favourite project, his economic salvation for the province of Ontario, and that is his new initiative for casino gambling.

Even while the government is proceeding with its policy on implementing casinos across the province, it continues to look at new additional areas of gambling revenue, including the licensing of its own video lottery terminals. The Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations has said in the past that no decisions had been made on video lottery terminals but that she has not ruled them out.

Experience in Nova Scotia and other jurisdictions has shown that their use is incredibly addictive, and in fact they've been removed from the convenience stores of Nova Scotia. I want to give the Premier the opportunity to be specific today by asking if he will guarantee that the government will not implement video lotteries in this province.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I'd refer that to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations.

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): When we made the announcement about the pilot project in Windsor we said quite clearly at that time that VLTs would be allowed within the confines of the casino, and that's the long and the short of it.

Mr Bradley: When the government first announced its intention to open casinos in Ontario it indicated it

was looking at, I believe, seven different locations. Since then, the government has commissioned a study by Coopers and Lybrand on casino gambling, including the number of potential provincial casinos which the province can sustain and their potential locations. The report has now been completed, it is my understanding.

Will the minister explain what the report has revealed about your government's casino plans? How many casinos does the report recommend that the province can sustain? Where will they be located? And by the way, why is the government refusing to release the Coopers and Lybrand report?

Hon Ms Churley: The report to which the member is referring in fact will be ready very soon. It's not quite completed and, of course, as soon as it is and as soon as I get receipt of it, it will be released to the public. It is one of many reports which the government commissioned around gaming in general, and this report, I would say within the next week or two—I'm not quite sure when it will be complete—will be released to the public, and then we will respond to the recommendations within that report.

Mr Bradley: Would the minister reveal to the House whether or not the Coopers and Lybrand report will deal with the additional costs for security and policing that will result in this province as a result of your policy to implement casino gambling, particularly in light of the fact that Bill 48 and your program to restrict expenditures in the public domain will in fact result in rather substantial layoffs of police in various parts of the province and will result as well in the diminishing of the resources that might be available to those police forces?

Hon Ms Churley: To begin with, I don't think at this point there's any evidence that there will be police layoffs. But referring specifically to the question the member asked, I should point out again that the full cost of policing, both internal and external, will be completely covered by the proceeds from the casino. So it will not cost the taxpayers any extra money to fund policing in Windsor.

I think that's a very important issue to point out to the member across the way, because we have come up with a government-owned casino in Windsor which the taxpayers of Ontario will not pay one cent for, unlike that party over there which constructed the dome, which the taxpayers of Ontario are still paying for. The taxpayers will not contribute a cent to the policing of the casino in Windsor.

1420

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): My question is to the Premier. When you brought down your latest \$2-billion tax grab, our leader, Mike Harris, said that the only economy it would stimulate would be the

underground economy. It is now projected that the underground economy represents 15% of our gross domestic product or over \$42 billion annually.

Can you tell us how much you estimate your latest tax grab has stimulated the underground economy in the province of Ontario?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I think the Minister of Finance is well qualified to answer that question.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): It is indeed a fact that in Ontario, and other provinces as well, the underground economy has been growing in recent years. It is no secret. It's no surprise. It's not a good thing to have happening, because it means that the people who don't take advantage of the underground economy end up paying more than they would otherwise do.

That message needs to go out. We in the Ministry of Finance are in the process of hiring new auditors who will pursue those who avoid paying their fair share of taxes in this province. But there's no question that the underground economy has grown in Ontario and in other provinces.

Mr Carr: Minister, the amount, I will tell you again, that the underground economy is worth is about \$42 billion in Ontario. Your ministry officials have said on CBC Radio that the underground activity is up 25 times. What has been referred to as the "fink line" used to average about two calls a week; it's now up to 10 calls a day. The reason is very clear: We have reached the point where tax increases have driven the people to the underground economy.

You realize there's a problem; what are you going to do to stop it? How are we going to stop this trend which is happening in the province of Ontario?

Hon Mr Laughren: It is certainly clear to all of us. I had a meeting with the provincial ministers of finance several months ago to talk about this very matter. In Quebec the problem I believe is even more serious than it is in Ontario. That's cold comfort, I appreciate. I'm not suggesting for a minute that that gives us any reason for relaxing in our vigilance on collecting taxes that are owed to us.

It's also clear that the underground economy took an enormous jump with the introduction of the GST. That's not the only reason for the increase in the underground economy. We know that it's very high on cigarettes and on alcohol. We know that. We are working with the federal government and with other provincial governments as well to try and get a handle on this.

If it was as easy to identify and describe, of course it'd be easier to do something about it, but it's very tough and the enforcement question is one we are pursuing almost as we speak.

Mr Carr: The problem is that the Minister of Finance doesn't realize where the problem is. The

problem is that taxes are too high. It isn't only the provincial government's fault; there are municipalities and the federal government. The fact of the matter is that in the province of Ontario right now taxes are too high and people are going underground. They are saying, "We are not going to pay the taxes because they are too high in the province of Ontario."

We now have 40 people in the Ministry of Finance whose job it is to try and find examples of the underground activity. This is no answer. The problem is the taxes in the province of Ontario are too high. In order to remain competitive, we need a tax environment which will allow people to pay their fair share and not try to avoid taxes.

The problem is that taxes are too high. You can hire more people to try and find it, but will you give us a commitment today that in order to get rid of the situation of the underground taxes you will not increase taxes in the province of Ontario in the remainder of your mandate, for probably the next two years? Hopefully, it will be sooner. Will you give the people of this province a commitment that as a result of your taxes you will not increase any more taxes in the province of Ontario over the next two years?

Hon Mr Laughren: The member opposite takes a line that is sometimes described as populist or Reagan-like in its simplicity. But the solution the member from the Tories talks about all the time is that you simply reduce all your taxes, reduce all your expenditures and the province will be prosperous. What the member never talks about are the services those taxes provide, to protect the most vulnerable people in our society, to provide an educational system in our society, to provide a health care system that's second to none anywhere. The member never talks about that; he simply talks about reducing the taxes that pay for those services which people in this province want.

Finally, I've gone through from time to time in this Legislature where this province ranks with other provinces. We are not an excessively taxed province, whether you compare ourselves with other provinces, if you look at the corporate side, or if you compare ourselves with other jurisdictions south of the border. I do realize that no one likes to pay more taxes, but I think people in this province understand that the very simplistic view that you just keep lowering taxes all the time and somehow all the services will still be provided is not one that has any credence whatsoever in this province any more.

LABOUR POLICY

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I have a copy of an article from the Kitchener-Waterloo Record. This article reports on the contract that apparently you have offered to municipalities. It says, "Municipal employees and their unions will have a much larger say in how the

respective municipalities are run." It goes on to say, "Some critics say that accompanying government initiatives greatly bolster the hand of labour and will go well beyond fiscal issues and deficit reduction."

Will you confirm today that in fact these extensive union powers are part of your social contract agreement?

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): No.

Mr David Johnson: I guess I'll take it that he will not confirm. That means we can expect those kinds of powers to be part of the social contract agreement.

Again to the minister, the chief administrative officer from Waterloo, Gerry Thompson, has said that this could allow labour to sit on senior committees of the municipalities such as the policy and priorities committee. I quote the CAO. He says, "It's conceivable that union representatives might demand to sit on senior bodies such as the region's policy and priorities committee, a committee that deals with strategic planning and the budget."

This ideological baggage will cost the municipalities dearly in the future. The municipalities do not want to carry this baggage. I ask again, will the minister rethink his situation and will the minister give an undertaking to this House that he will not permit labour leaders to sit on such senior committees of the municipalities?

Hon Mr Philip: The only ideological bashing is the ideological bashing that comes from the third party. What we have is ongoing negotiations, both at the local municipal level and at the sector table, and those negotiations are ongoing. We are prepared to look at any proposal by the municipalities. The municipalities in turn then, that I've talked to, are quite prepared to consult with their unions and other interested parties and to work out any kind of ideas that will help them to run their municipalities more efficiently and consult in a more open way with those who are working for them. I don't call that the rhetoric which the member has used.

Mr David Johnson: If you talk to the municipalities, they will certainly make it clear that they do not want labour representatives on their senior committees such as their priorities committees and their budget committees. That's not at all going to be helpful. What the municipalities are asking for in a positive sense is the tools to be able to deal with the draconian thrust of the social contract legislation—that's what they want—not to have representatives foisted on them. The pay freeze won't help much. The pause days will help very little. The minister and this government are tying their hands and their legs and saying, "Swim."

For example, this same article says that the draft agreement also attempts to put a damper on contracting out work to outside companies or consultants by stipu-

lating priority consideration must be given to work done in-house. Municipalities need this kind of tool, need contracting out, need all other kinds of tools that they can put their hands on.

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The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Mr David Johnson: Will the minister confirm that he will revisit and will he allow the municipalities to use all the tools, including contracting out?

Hon Mr Philip: It would be the most authoritarian, reactionary thing that I could do, to tell municipalities how they are going to negotiate with their unions. I'm not going to do that.

Quite frankly, I don't know why the honourable member, who was a mayor, finds it so repulsive that some municipalities—and I say "some"—might consider using a management style which involves the unions in some sort of decision-making which some of the most successful corporations in North America are now using. I think perhaps some of the larger corporations are more progressive than the honourable member is.

TOPICAL

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): My question is to the Chairman of Management Board. Sir, I'd like to refer you to this publication called Topical, which is published by the Management Board secretariat. It's put out regularly throughout the year with some good information for Ontario public servants. This is the January issue and in fact out of eight pages, there are four pages of good information on the United Way campaign and "Employee Volunteers Key To Drive Success" and other very interesting things and then there are four pages of Job Mart. That, frankly, is what it's all about: It's information to the employees.

Now let me take you to the latest publication, the same one, Topical. It's expanded to 16 pages. There's one page of Job Mart. There are 15 pages of NDP cabinet ministers and appointed hacks talking about propaganda. Look at this for an interesting one. It's a big centrefold on Floyd Laughren. You finally made it, Floyd. You finally made it. I'm glad you didn't allow them to take the picture with your suspenders or you might have been fired. But Floyd is going on and telling everybody what a wonderful job the government is doing; nothing but NDP propaganda.

Mr Chairman of Management Board, is this a proper use of taxpayers' money, for you to sell your message on what a great job the government is doing?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): The member opposite likes to portray everything as government propaganda, but I think it's fair to say that Topical, the paper that he refers to, is a publicity organ for the people who work in the OPS. It talks about jobs, yes, but it's also a

document which imparts information to the people who work in the OPS about their jobs, not just about new jobs that are available.

The articles which the member is referring to—and he held it up and showed it to everybody—were all articles about the restructuring of government, issues which the employees in every single ministry of this government are asking questions about every day of every week. That's why we decided to put out some information.

Mr Mahoney: By way of statistics, just let me tell you that they put out 90,000 copies of this document per month. This double-size issue represents 720,000 pages of nothing more than political propaganda that no one wants to hear about, costing the taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars.

Here's the type of information to the Ontario public service: Floyd Laughren saying, "In 20 or 30 years, how the public sector looks and the role it plays in society will be your doing"—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Sarnia.

Mr Mahoney: He's talking to the public servants—"because you're the ones that helped steer it in a new direction." They must be somewhat confused when this Treasurer says that.

Here we have an in-depth profile of the Premier's former campaign manager entitled, "Secretary of Cabinet Redefines the 3Rs of OPS Management." Mr Agnew is quoted as saying the size of government is "too complex, too big and too confusing." I guess that's why you increased all those cabinet ministers without portfolio, to try to reduce the size of government. Maybe that's what you did.

The Speaker: And the member's question?

Mr Mahoney: All this document is is NDP propaganda. What you have done is taken a very functional, important publication to the Ontario public servants and you've turned it into nothing more than an NDP rag full of your propaganda, trying to sell your line, your bill of goods to the people of this province. This is a total waste of taxpayers' money. How do you justify in these times throwing away money on a rag like this?

Hon Mr Charlton: The member across the way can refer to Topical as a rag and refer to the money we spend on Topical as throwing away taxpayers' money, but the reality is that the issues we've addressed, both in the current issue of Topical and that we intend to address in the future, are the very same questions members across the way have been raising here in the House and that the people who work in the OPS have been raising with their managers throughout the civil service for months now. They deserve answers and they'll get them.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): My question is for the Minister of Health. You should be aware that the Ontario Hospital Association has reached an impasse with your government in its attempts to negotiate an agreement under your social contract legislation, Bill 48. The Ontario Hospital Association is now dealing with two significant obstacles because of your government's refusal to accept our amendments to Bill 48.

The first obstacle is that under Bill 48, you cannot lock in non-signing parties. As you know, CUPE is not at the social contract table. Therefore, any agreement that might be arrived at would have to exclude CUPE employees in the hospital sector, which in effect means that the Ontario Hospital Association won't be able to reach an agreement before the August deadline.

The second obstacle is, your government and the Liberal Party voted against the OHA's amendment that would have ensured that the low-income cutoff would have applied to all part-time employees. You should know that in the hospital sector, only 30,000 out of 164,800 total employees are full-time. Therefore, under Bill 48, any agreement would mean that 30,000, or 20% of the employees would have to bear the brunt of the social contract savings.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Jim Wilson: Here's the question, Mr Speaker: Minister, because of your government's refusal to address these very significant negotiating obstacles during the amendment process of Bill 48, the OHA may have to walk away from the sectoral table. What do you expect the Ontario Hospital Association to do in light of the barriers it faces in trying to reach an agreement before the August deadline set by your government?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Bill 48 stands in the name of the Minister of Finance and I will refer the question to him.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): The member for Simcoe West raises some legitimate questions and problems surrounding the negotiations in the health care sector, surrounding the social contract legislation. We are working very hard to try and resolve those issues and, as I said, they are legitimate issues that the member raises.

It's my hope that CUPE will at some point return to the sectoral table and we can get on with it. If, on the other hand, they choose not to take part in the sectoral bargaining, then of course they would be subjected to the fail-safe legislation. I have not myself given up hope that we will be able to resolve the differences that are still outstanding at the health sector table.

1440

Mr Jim Wilson: It's all very well to talk about wishful thinking on behalf of the Treasurer, but the

obstacles I presented are very real, and they stem directly from your refusal and the Liberal Party's refusal to accept the amendments that the Ontario PC Party put forward on behalf of the Ontario Hospital Association.

I think the Treasurer would agree that the Ontario Hospital Association has played the NDP's game all the way along and has been very cooperative. The government took a political decision to reject our amendments. Now the OHA needs leadership and it needs a political decision to help it out to reach an agreement.

Because 30,000 full-time employees out of a total of 164,800 will have to take the brunt of the social contract savings, perhaps I could word my question to the Treasurer this way: Treasurer, do you think it's fair that there would be a social contract in a hospital sector in which 20% of the employees will have to bear 100% of the savings that need to be achieved to reduce your deficit? Not the hospitals' deficit but your deficit? Do you think it's fair that 20% of the employees are going to take 100% of the pain?

Hon Mr Laughren: As I said in response to the member's first question, he does raise some very legitimate issues. The fact is, though, that if we had accepted the OHA amendment, which the Tories then put in the form of a Tory amendment, that would have raised a whole new set of questions as well, so that whether we went with the exemption of the \$30,000 or went the route that we did go, there was a particular set of problems attached to either route that we chose to go.

In this case, because a large number of people earning under \$30,000 do work in the health care sector, it does pose a particular problem, no question about that. The OHA and the others in the health care sector are attempting, along with the government, to work out that problem. As I said earlier, I'm hopeful that we can resolve it, but I don't dismiss for a minute—

Mr Jim Wilson: They need your leadership. They have no answers.

Hon Mr Laughren: The member for Simcoe West says it needs our leadership and these answers. That's exactly what we're trying to resolve at the bargaining table, and we'll continue to work very hard to accomplish that.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): My question is for the Minister of Health. There has been much debate about the recent announcement from your ministry concerning the reform of long-term care. My riding of Kingston and The Islands has many senior citizens in it, and of course they're concerned about how the initiative around long-term care will be affecting them. What have you been hearing from the senior citizens of Ontario about this announcement?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I've certainly been hearing from most senior citizens of the prov-

ince that they're delighted that action is now occurring to put in place a long-term care system and that they are appreciative of the fact that in tough economic times our government has been making the necessary reallocations within our finances to enable us to put that system in place.

In fact, let me say to the member that the praise for our health care system and its excellence comes not just from seniors within this province but from no less a vehicle than the front page of the New York Times last week, which said, "In Canada, Elderly Praise Their Health Care." Under Bill 101, we have moved forward to put in place a system of long-term care.

If I can quote from the New York Times, it made the point that, "In the US so great is the fear of being forced into poverty by the cost of long-term care that more than 2.2 million Americans have bought insurance to cover that cost." In Ontario, there is no such fear.

Mr Gary Wilson: Madam Minister, you've clearly outlined the importance of maintaining our health care system and working with these reforms, so I'm just wondering how these more equitable steps will be implemented.

Hon Mrs Grier: In order to make the system more equitable, and particularly the system within institutions, we have made adjustments, as I think everybody in this Legislature has heard and is aware of, in the payments that residents make.

Under the system that we replaced, 10,000 residents of nursing homes and homes for the aged paid between \$40 and \$90 a day. At the same time, 4,700 residents received similar services but paid only \$26 a day. With the new system, the daily accommodation fee for all residents is between \$26 and \$38 a day. The reason that our seniors need have no fear of being pushed into poverty is that our system of basing it on their ability to pay takes into account their income and not their assets. So we have a continuum of care and a system that is affordable for everyone, regardless of their means.

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr Charles Beer (York North): My question is for the Minister of Education and Training and it concerns educational funding. As you will know, over the last nine months, school boards have been hit hard by several changes in funding. In the first place, the promise of a 1% and 2%, 2% increase in budgets for education was cut back to zero. Then boards were cut a further \$290 million in terms of the expenditure controls that you brought forward. Thirdly, the social contract is estimated to take some \$535 million out of the system. Last but not least, the Treasurer's budget will account for something in the order of \$50 million to \$75 million less for school boards. This almost \$1-billion hit within one year raises clearly the importance of dealing with educational financial reform.

Can you today tell this House specifically and clearly what your specific timetable will be for that reform, what consultative process you have put in place or are putting in place to bring about that reform, and finally, will those changes be ready in time for next year's provincial budget?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): There is a team of people and representatives from school boards and others in the community who are part of the educational finance reform secretariat, and they've been working on this item for quite some period of time.

I hope that I'll be bringing something forward to the Treasury Board and to cabinet this fall, but I can tell you very clearly that whatever the end results are through the education finance reform project, it will require, of course, legislation to be brought forward to the House, and therefore it won't be possible to have it in place for 1994 unless you and representatives from the Conservative Party want to make a commitment today that you'll pass the legislation this fall.

Mr Beer: I would think that if you had been moving with more diligence, we might have been in a position in the fall to actually look at legislation so we could bring about that change. Clearly, you know there is a crisis out there. In fact, you spoke about it at a recent meeting in North York and talked about the very severe problems many boards are experiencing. In fact, there are some 18 assessment-poor school boards right now with deficits. They can't wait until December, they can't wait until the next budget and they can't wait until whenever you're going to bring your legislation in.

I think what they need to know, those 18 and others which presumably are going to be in a deficit situation because of the changes that have taken place in the last number of months, and what they want to know is, what are you going to be doing to work with them to get those deficits under control and to make sure that the kinds of cutbacks that are going on, cutbacks that are affecting kids with real programs, families, children who need those programs—what are you going to do to deal with those specific problems facing the assessment-poor boards that now have deficits?

Hon Mr Cooke: We're working specifically on the ones that are the most difficult, like the Ottawa-Carleton French-Language School Board.

Last year, my predecessor, Tony Silipo, assisted a few of the school boards that were in real difficulty, like the York region Catholic school board. Part of the responsibility clearly has to lie with the trustees. In the York region Catholic separate school situation, financial assistance was committed last year and that board decided, through its trustees, to increase the deficit again this year. I don't think that is particularly responsible leadership from the local school board.

Part of the questions and policy decisions that I think we have to look at through education finance reform is a stronger partnership between the ministry, the provincial government and school boards. I think ultimately, in addition to looking at how the resources are shared across the province, we need to look at putting more financial controls in place, from the Ministry of Education, on school boards, and those are policy initiatives that we'll bring forward as well.

1450

HIV IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a question for the Minister of Correctional Services. Studies of correctional facilities in other provinces, such as Quebec, indicate that as many as 7% of inmates carry HIV. Your ministry can test inmates for several virulent diseases, but HIV is not one. There are serious problems posed by this policy for guards and inmates alike. Tuberculosis and other virulent contagious diseases often do not show up in conventional testing of HIV-positive people because their immune system is suppressed. As you know, most HIV patients die from serious and contagious secondary diseases such as tuberculosis, not from HIV itself.

Minister, are you prepared to support reclassification of HIV from section 22 to 35 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act, so that Correctional Services may test inmates for HIV and reduce the problem of multiple carriers and protect guards and inmates alike?

Hon David Christopherson (Minister of Correctional Services): I thank the member for the question. Obviously, this ministry takes very seriously this issue, particularly as it relates to the health and safety of both the inmates and, of course, our staff who work there.

I'm aware of some of the recent public discussions about moving this particular matter from section 22 to section 35, and I can say that at this point I am looking at the matter, as our senior medical adviser has stated there are certain circumstances in which he would feel comfortable that this be moved over to section 35.

But let me say very clearly to the member that if indeed he is talking about the issue of mandatory testing for HIV, at this point this jurisdiction, like all the other jurisdictions across Canada, both provincially and federally, does not support the issue of mandatory testing for a whole host of reasons, not the least of which is that it can give a very false sense of security in that there can be a few weeks' to a few months' window of opportunity where a negative result can be shown and the reality is that there indeed can be the virus present.

There are a lot of reasons why we wouldn't want to move to mandatory testing holus-bolus, but I appreciate the question and we're reviewing, indeed, the possibility of moving from section 22 to 35.

Mr Runciman: I knew the minister was going to use this argument about a window, and it's a window of ridiculousness, really. It's unbelievable, when we're talking about dying and guards being placed at risk, to talk about that sort of opportunity window.

Current policies in the ministry promote mutual distrust and suspicion among guards and inmates. In one case, guards refused to resuscitate a patient thought to carry HIV, effectively leaving him to die. In another, a guard applied mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to an inmate suspected of carrying HIV. During the course of this procedure, the patient vomited blood into the guard's mouth.

I have letters from inmates of the Guelph Correctional Centre who claim that some guards are openly hostile to them because the guards fear inmates who carry HIV and other related illnesses. One prisoner writes: "Four guards decked out in helmets and special suits took the man from his cell to the hole because he was in pain. No one knew what to do with this inmate."

Minister, is this the kind of treatment that you believe terminally ill patients should receive in Ontario correctional facilities? Are you prepared today to provide better facilities for HIV-positive inmates, to test these inmates so we know which ones need special facilities and treatment, to improve training for guards so inmates and guards can have peace of mind, and to put an end to horror stories like the three I've related here?

Hon Mr Christopherson: It's unfortunate that interspersed with actual situations that certainly are important and serious, the honourable member chose to shut the window of reason in terms of listening to what someone says. The fact of the matter is that this window is real. It's based on medical knowledge. It's not something that I have dreamed up.

The fact of the matter is that we have in place universal precautions which are deemed to be, by all the jurisdictions in Canada, and to the best of my knowledge, mostly around the world, the most effective policy available. In fact, it stems from the communicable disease policy that was implemented in April 1989 by the previous government. I commend them for the efforts they've taken there.

We continue to review this matter because of its importance, but to take the kind of stance that the member has today I think really does not give to this issue the kind of serious debate and consideration it deserves.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REFORM

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Last week, you released in a white paper a proposal to scrap welfare as we know it and outlined a new support program for people with low incomes.

We all know people everywhere who have been

saying for some time that welfare is not working, that something must be done and that we must break the welfare and poverty cycle. I'd like to give you an example. In my riding, Niagara Falls, many people have lost their jobs through the recession. This summer there are some minimum wage jobs in tourism. Single mothers have said to me that they would like to go back to work but fear their families will lose out.

Mr Minister, how will this program assist single mothers who are trying to get back into the workforce?

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): I thank the member for the question. There are, if I can answer the question very directly, at least two significant ways in which single parents with children would be able to be assisted under the new system. The first is under the drug benefit provisions and the second is under the child benefit provision.

As I indicated last week, by establishing the child benefit outside the social assistance system, it will no longer be necessary for people to be on social assistance in order to receive assistance with the raising of their children, because that will be tied rather to people's income. The situation that the member described I think would be ripe for that kind of approach to be taken.

Similarly, under the work that my colleague the Minister of Health is doing with some of the changes we are looking at with respect to the drug benefits, those benefits would also be tied, as we are looking at them now, more to income and therefore not particularly to whether or not people are on social assistance. Those are two significant improvements over the present system.

Ms Harrington: I am sure this will be of benefit and I really hope that message gets out there as directly as possible to the people on welfare.

In your announcement last week, you stated that you will be talking with interested groups and individuals over the summer and as far as September 30. What I want to ask you, if I possibly can, is, will you be communicating with the people in Niagara about where and when you will be able to speak with them about these changes? Also, how will people be able to participate in these meetings?

Hon Mr Silipo: I would first of all want to say that I encourage all members, on their own initiative, to set up discussions with people in their own ridings, and I'm sure many people will. Beyond inviting people to write, to send in their comments to us by September 30, we will also be setting up a number of meetings of our own volition throughout the province that I'll be attending and that my parliamentary assistant, the member for Chatham-Kent, will be attending. As well, we will be responding to any number of invitations that will come.

We also want to ensure that as we work out the significant and important details over the next number

of months, we will be involving people who will be affected. We will be doing that through the Council of Consumers, through a number of groups that we'll be meeting with and that we want to involve very directly with us in discussions helping us to design the new system, all of which we are intent on putting in place in 1995.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Minister of Finance and it's about jobs. As I think everyone realizes, we now have the first six months' employment data out for 1993. In spite of the job growth that took place in the first six months, of about 77,000 jobs, the numbers are still quite troubling, at least to us. The unemployment rate for the first six months was 10.8%, which is the same as 1992. In spite of the job growth, we still saw record numbers of people unemployed. The real number, as you point out in your budget, is closer to 14%.

My question really has to do with what we can expect for the year. Realizing now that for the first six months the unemployment rate was 10.8%, do you still anticipate that for the full year you will have your 10.3% unemployment rate that you projected in the budget, and is that about the best the people of Ontario can expect from the government in 1993?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I assume the member for Scarborough-Agincourt wants a direct and frank response, not a political response which pretends that unemployment isn't as bad as it really is. That's the kind of exchange I wish to engage in.

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The member is correct when he says there's been a net increase in the year-to-date employment of about 77,000. Actually, there have been about 120,000 new jobs created, but there were job losses in certain sectors, including public sector employment, I might add, which reduced the net amount to about 77,000.

That's roughly in line with what we predicted in the budget, as the member knows, of about 106,000 new jobs in 1993-94, so we're more or less on track for the number of new jobs that will be created in the economy this year. I do not believe we will see much of an improvement in the unemployment numbers this year. That's simply reflecting not my own views but those of private sector forecasters, federal government forecasters. Virtually anybody who looks at the economy is saying that unemployment's going to remain unacceptably high in the next three, four, five years.

Mr Phillips: I appreciate the answer. Another concern about the employment numbers, at least to us, is what looks like a trend to more part-time jobs and fewer full-time jobs. As I look at the numbers, at least to the best of my ability, for the first six months of 1993, it looks like we've seen about 300,000 fewer full-

time jobs in Ontario than we saw in 1990, offset by a growth of about 100,000 part-time jobs. It used to be that around 15% of the jobs were part-time; now we're getting around 19%, heading to 20%.

Do you view with any concern what looks like a trend to an increasing number of part-time jobs, and what sorts of things is the government planning to do, what sorts of things can the Legislature do, what sorts of things can the people of Ontario do, if this is a trend we should be concerned about?

Hon Mr Laughren: I do view with some concern the trend to part-time jobs in our economy. This has been going on now I suppose for 10 years. I don't know precisely when the numbers started creeping up, as to the percentage of jobs that were part-time versus full-time; certainly it's not something new, but when a recession hits, it exacerbates that kind of problem. There's absolutely no question about that.

I was looking at the sectors in which there have been the greatest increase in jobs. Community business and personal services lead the pack, with almost 70,000 jobs this year, financial services 18,000, construction 14,000, primary industries 11,000, communications 7,000, manufacturing 3,000. Offsetting that was a decline in jobs in transportation, wholesale and retail trade, where often there are a lot of part-time jobs, utilities and public administration, which gives us our net of 77,000.

I believe what the government can do to address the phenomenon of part-time jobs increasing as a percentage of total jobs is somewhat limited. What I think we must be doing is making sure there are education and training programs that allow people, even if they're already working part-time or if they're not working at all, to take advantage of the training opportunities or the educational opportunities so that as the economy improves in this decade there will be more opportunities for them than there would otherwise be.

AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): To the Minister of Agriculture and Food: Given that municipal and school taxes inevitably will be increasing in spite of the fact that municipal councils and school boards are attempting to control their spending, and given the fact that Bill 48 will create for them major, major headaches, what would the farm tax rebate have been under these new circumstances had it not been frozen at the 1992-93 level?

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): I think what the honourable member is asking me is what percentage of rebate the farmers are going to get on the farm tax rebate program, given that it's frozen at its 1992 level.

I might add that the member is suggesting that there are going to be a lot of increases in municipal taxes across this province, and I don't happen to agree with

that. I think most municipalities and school boards have worked very hard at keeping their tax increases down. They are going to be working with the social contract in trying to reduce the costs on salaries and wages of their employees. I have not heard any municipalities talk about passing along any increased costs in the form of taxes.

With that, with the freeze on the amount of money available for the farm tax rebate, we believe that somewhere in the order of 72%, 73% rebate will be achieved this year.

Mr Villeneuve: The minister knows very well that that is building up, and certainly I hope he's right. I am led to believe by a lot of rural municipalities where many employees are at the \$30,000 or less that indeed they are being cut very extensively. However, be that as it may; time will tell.

There have been major cutbacks in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Two colleges have been closed down, plus \$3 million cut from the University of Guelph. We agree that there's been an announcement today that many dollars are going to be spent in new colleges, and I agree that education is very important for some people, although seemingly not too important for people in agriculture.

Would you be prepared, Mr Minister, to renegotiate with New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology and attempt to keep that only college in northern Ontario open? I know you will be meeting with them, if you haven't already. Would you be prepared to look seriously at their offer?

Hon Mr Buchanan: I certainly look seriously at whatever people have to offer in terms of concrete, positive suggestions. In fact, I will be meeting with a group of people from the New Liskeard community in less than half an hour; they are bringing forward, I understand, a number of suggestions. Now, some of them cost a fair bit of money and are not going to allow me to achieve the reductions in spending. I am interested, though, in preserving the research component of the budget that was allocated at New Liskeard, and there are other research stations in northern Ontario that we would like to maintain. We are looking for partnership agreements with commodity groups and general farm organizations and other people who might be interested in helping to fund such activities, and we will be meeting with those committees to try and maintain services to the best of our ability.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY AGENCY

Mr David Winninger (London South): My question is directed to the Minister of Labour. In my riding of London South, and I'm certain across the province, there is a concern about workplace safety. There is a need for workers to be aware of health and safety legislation, workers' rights, accident investigation and investigating workplace hazards. This knowledge will

enable labour to work together with management to address more effectively the problem of workplace injuries.

Minister, the Workplace Health and Safety Agency certification training program was launched three months ago. Can the minister tell us how training is progressing and whether it is having an impact on Ontario workplaces?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): I can tell the honourable member that certification training is progressing very well. Already the first graduates of the program have returned to their workplaces, and labour and management are working together to jointly address health and safety issues; 15 courses have already been completed, including one in London, and 176 other courses are either under way or scheduled to begin soon. More than 200 people have graduated from the program, and the agency expects to train 100,000 managers and workers by April 1995.

I thought that of interest to the member would be the comments from one of the first people to take the course, a manager from a manufacturing plant in the Windsor area. He said that before the course, he had always thought of his worker counterparts as the guys on the other side of the fence. In the course, he said, he learned that now they're not the guys on the other side of the fence: "They're the guys in the same building as myself working towards the same goals."

1510

PETITIONS

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario re Bill 38, an amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act to permit wide-open Sunday shopping and eliminate Sunday as a legal holiday:

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38. We believe that this bill defies God's laws, violates the principles of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection to workers regarding when they must work, and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province. The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man but dates from God's creation and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all people, both physically and spiritually. We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

It's signed by 160 constituents, and I affix my signature.

ONTARIO FILM REVIEW BOARD

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the Ontario Film Review Board, at its May 6, 1993, policy committee meeting, decided to loosen the guidelines for films and videos, for Ontario; and

"Whereas the loosening will result in permitting some very gross and indecent acts in films and videos; and

"Whereas these acts include bondage, ejaculation on the face and insertion of foreign objects; and

"Whereas the aforementioned acts are not in any way part of true human sexual activity but rather belong in textbooks for case studies of deviance; and

"Whereas these activities not only violate community standards but parts of the Canadian Criminal Code;

"We, the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon the Ontario Legislature to cancel the new policy resolution of the Ontario Film Review Board and dismiss the chairperson, Dorothy Christian, from her position for her lack of sensitivity towards Ontarians and for being dedicated to represent special interest groups more than the taxpayers of Ontario."

I'm happy to support this resolution.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I have a petition here signed by hundreds of people in my riding, people like Jessie Greig and Marian Miners, concerned about Bill 38.

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and for religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship for many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I affix my name thereto.

DAY CARE

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I have a petition to this assembly and especially to the Minister of Community and Social Services. It reads:

"As of September 3, 1993, the region of Peel will stop subsidizing the cost of family home day care for children in the region. This subsidy is provided to parents going to school to further improve themselves, and parents not making adequate money to ensure their children receive good family home care.

"The Peel region subsidizes children with special needs, whether it be medical or developmental. We cannot afford to ignore these children's special needs. It's hard enough in today's society to earn enough money to ensure the necessities of life. With the funding

stopped, many people will not be able to afford to continue to work or continue their education. Also, welfare and unemployment again grows. We don't want this to happen."

I have signed my name to this petition.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will enable government to unilaterally and arbitrarily restrict payments for psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality mental health care services across the province,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw the proposals to restrict payments for psychotherapy and withdraw the proposal to allow the cabinet to make decisions with respect to the number of times patients may receive particular insured services and set maximums with respect thereto. The government of Ontario must reaffirm its commitment to the process of joint management and rational reform of the delivery of medical services in the province as specified under the Ontario Medical Association-government framework agreement."

That's signed by a couple of hundred people from Waterloo and Kitchener and area, and I too affix my name to this petition.

SCARBOROUGH BLUFFS CONSERVATION

Mr Robert Frankford (Scarborough East): I have a petition from a number of people who continue to be worried about the erosion of the Scarborough waterfront, which has worsened since I last presented a petition.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas it is in the interest of all people of Ontario and all of our future generations to preserve the beauty of the Scarborough Bluffs; and

"Whereas the province of Ontario, the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and the Metro Toronto and Region Conservation Authority commenced the construction of a breakwall and roadway to stabilize the bluffs and create a waterfront trail; and

"Whereas erosion continues at an alarming rate in areas where the breakwall is incomplete, thus threatening the safety of homes near the bluff edge; and

"Whereas some homes have already been expropri-

ated due to erosion, at great public cost,

"We, the undersigned, call upon the Minister of Natural Resources to make the securing of the bluffs an immediate priority and to enable the Metro Toronto conservation authority to proceed with necessary construction to complete the lakefront breakwall and roadway between Rogate Place and the Bellamy ravine."

I append my signature to this.

HEALTH SERVICES

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition which is signed by many patients and physicians in Toronto.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I agree with this petition and have affixed my signature to it.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

"Whereas proposals made under government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I too have affixed my signature to it.

CASINO GAMBLING

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): I

have received this past week many, many petitions from the people of Niagara Falls that were distributed in the last couple of months through the economic development agency in Niagara Falls. It reads:

"We believe that the New Democratic Party government considered legalized gambling in Ontario to revitalize our recession-battered tourism industry and to provide employment. Each year, over 12 million people regularly visit our fine city. Of these 12 million tourists, it is estimated that over 70% of our visitors stay for only one day. We feel that one government-regulated casino would be an excellent attraction to retain our tourists for longer periods. Increasing the percentage of overnight tourists would have a significant positive impact on our economy in Niagara Falls and the region, which would also contribute to the provincial government's increased revenue requirements.

"In summary, we believe that one regulated gambling casino will provide much-needed employment, increase tourism for our existing hospitality industry, provide an immediate and lasting improvement for our local economy and provide much-needed revenue for the provincial government.

"We therefore strongly urge you to support the establishment of one government-regulated casino in Niagara Falls."

1520

CLOSURE OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food has decided to close Centralia College of Agricultural Technology and the veterinary services laboratory diagnostic laboratory at the college as of May 1, 1994,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To reverse the decision to close CCAT and VLS diagnostic lab located on Centralia's campus."

I have signed the petition.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably

attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I've affixed my name to this petition.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): On behalf of the member for Hamilton Mountain, I have a petition to members of provincial Parliament. It reads as follows:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to the proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for quality of life, religious freedom and for family time. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38 dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

It is signed by 337 constituents of Hamilton and surrounding area and I present the petition.

HEALTH CARE

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have another petition. To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw the proposal to restrict payment for psychotherapy and withdraw the proposal to allow the cabinet to make decisions with respect to the number of times patients may receive particular insured services and set maximums with respect thereto;

"The government must reaffirm its commitment to the process of joint management and rational reform of the delivery of medical services in the province as specified in the Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I have affixed my signature to this document.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): "I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of legal holiday in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. Elimination of such a day would be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and would cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38 dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

It's been signed by people from Stouffville, Uxbridge, Mount Albert, Sunderland, Sutton and Keswick, a good chunk of my riding.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I concur with this petition, which is signed by thousands of people, and affix my name to it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ONTARIO LOAN ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LES EMPRUNTS DE L'ONTARIO

Mr Sutherland, on behalf of Mr Laughren, moved third reading of Bill 25, An Act to authorize borrowing on the credit of the Consolidated Revenue Fund / Loi autorisant des emprunts garantis par le Trésor.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I don't have a great deal to add at this time. I think it's a very straightforward bill. We had quite a bit of discussion on second reading, quite a bit of debate among the members. This is a normal procedure for the government to carry out to allow it to do its borrowing. So, with that, I look forward to any additional comments that may come

about as a result of third reading.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Questions or comments? Are there any other members who wish to participate in this debate?

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I did want to speak, I guess rather briefly, on what's called Bill 25, just to remind ourselves that it's a bill, although only one page in length, that authorizes the government to borrow \$16 billion to fund its programs.

I think the debate around here has been very much on the spending side, and I thought I might spend just a couple of minutes on the other side of the equation, because if we are going to solve our fiscal problem so that we won't be looking at having to borrow these kinds of moneys, there are going to be two ways we will solve it. One is by getting the spending in order. As I say, that's what the debate here has been mainly around on this bill.

The other thing that we have to do is get the economy rolling. We've heard the expression—in fact, I think somewhere in the budget it says that the recession is over and that we now are on our way to recovery. I'm not sure I'll be able to find it quickly. Here it is. This is in the budget on page 39. "The recession has ended and the Ontario economy has turned the corner."

I think most people I speak to, at least, and most people out in Ontario don't feel that. They say, "Well, theoretically, it may have ended, but certainly for me it hasn't ended." In fact, as you look at the government's Economic Outlook, which is a useful document, I must say, you can see that the reason why people aren't feeling this recovery is that we have gone through two years now, 1990 and 1991, of a fairly significant decline in what's called the gross domestic product, and then in 1992 we saw a modest growth in the economy.

So even at the end of 1993, if we assume that the government's projections on the economy are right—and the government's projecting, I think, that the economy will grow around 3%; even if those numbers are right, and I suspect they'll be close to being right—at the end of 1993, the Ontario economy, in terms of output, will still be smaller than it was in 1989. In other words, we have a significantly larger population in Ontario. We've had not a bad growth in our export business. In spite of that, at the end of 1993, we, as a province, will be producing less than we did in 1989.

1530

That's why I think many people out there are saying, "The recession may be over technically, but for me it isn't." I make a habit of talking to virtually every business person I meet, if not all of my constituents when I run into them. I just say to them: "How's the economy? Are you feeling the pickup? Is it happening?" I don't know what other members are finding, but I can find virtually no one who believes the recession is over

and the economy is picking up.

There are certain companies that are doing quite well. Certainly some of our export-oriented companies are doing very well. Our problem is that, to solve our financial problems, we do need to get our spending under control, but somehow we have to get the economy moving. We will not be able to solve our deficit problem unless that happens.

On Friday the employment statistics came out. Frankly, I think all of us were pleased to see the growth in jobs. Earlier in the Legislature, the Minister of Finance pointed out that we did see in the first six months of 1993 a growth of about 77,000 jobs on average. The problem for us is that this 77,000 growth in jobs wasn't enough to even cover the number of jobs required for the people entering the labour force. So we actually saw the number of people unemployed in the province go up in the first six months of 1993.

That's another problem. I talked about somehow getting the gross domestic product growing. But I would say we also have a continuing very serious problem, unemployment; I must admit, not an easily solved one. It is not a problem also unique to Ontario. In fact all of us who followed the G-7 meetings, where the leaders of the seven major industrial countries met, know that was the number one item on their agenda, non-employment.

But in any event, I'm saying we are now halfway through 1993. The government in its budget predicted that the unemployment rate in Ontario, average in 1993, would be down from 10.8% in 1992 to 10.3% in 1993. I would say at the end of six months—we're halfway through the year—the unemployment rate has not gone down. It was 10.8% for the first six months, exactly what it was for 1992.

The one bright spot acknowledged is a growth in the number of jobs at 77,000. But as I say, that was not enough to accommodate even those people who had entered the labour force, let alone begin to make a dent in the number of people unemployed.

This continues to be for our party, and I daresay for many in the Legislature, the number one issue. That doesn't mean the deficit and getting our fiscal house in order isn't an extremely high priority, but we will not solve that problem by spending restrictions alone. We have to somehow or other see the climate where more jobs are created.

The one thing that I think is important to continue to remind ourselves of is, whenever we say, "We have to see jobs created," I think historically when politicians said that it meant government spending. "We need to see jobs created. That equals government spending." I think all three parties in the House now would acknowledge that those days are over and that the days when job creation was seen as something that could be done by public spending are finished.

Indeed, I think we all believe that the one in five jobs that are there in the broader public service, the whole issue we've been talking around, the social contract and what not, the number of jobs there, those one in five jobs, actually I think we'll see over the next two to three years fewer jobs in that sector.

Our challenge is clear, it seems to me. It's going to be job creation in the private sector that will be the solution to our problems. That doesn't mean we shouldn't do everything we possibly can to sustain the maximum number of jobs in the public service as long as we can do that efficiently and effectively.

I want to highlight some of the issues around employment. I think we all now know from the budget that even though Statistics Canada unemployment numbers suggest we're around 10.8%, the real number, when you take into account the number of people who have stopped looking—they're called discouraged workers—is much closer to 14%. I think it's important to remind ourselves of that number. I frankly commend the government for putting it in the budget document, because it's a necessary figure for us to be aware of.

On page 45, for those people watching or members who are interested in this, it's worth looking at that chart which shows the real unemployment number at 14%. What that means is that we've got up to 200,000 people who have just dropped out. They are not shown in the labour force. They are discouraged, they've stopped looking, but they are still in Ontario. They are people who could be productive members in the labour force but aren't there.

The second thing I wanted to talk a little bit about on the employment situation is that in the last decade really, the growth in jobs has been in the service sector. As a matter of fact, I've mentioned that in the first six months of 1993, there were 77,000 more jobs in Ontario than there were in the same period a year ago. Of those 77,000 jobs, 70,000 are in the service sector.

The challenge there is that fully half of the service sector jobs are in health, welfare and education. I think it's fair to say that we will not be seeing, over the next two to three years, job growth in that area. So if we're looking to the service sector to be the engine of job growth, the private part of the service sector will be, but we should expect in some respects an offset in the education sector and the health and welfare sector, where we will see at best, I think, jobs maintained.

I also wanted to touch briefly on the full-time/part-time employment situation, because underlying the numbers, in behind the numbers, is another disturbing trend, that is, that full-time jobs and part-time jobs are counted equally. If you have a part-time job, you're shown as employed. That shows just the same as would a full-time job.

We've seen in Ontario a very dramatic growth in the

number of people working part-time. In 1989, it used to be about 15% of the jobs; it's now 19%. It looks like it's going to 20%. We saw the number of full-time jobs decline by about 300,000 and the number of part-time jobs go up by about 100,000.

I can understand people wanting to work part-time—for many people that is their preferred employment—but an increasing percentage of these are what's called involuntary part-time. They are part-time not by choice but by necessity. In many respects, it understates the employment problem, as I say, because of the number of organizations that have converted full-time jobs to part-time jobs.

I think all of us know that at one stage Ontario had far and away the lowest unemployment rate in the country, and we've seen now, in the first six months of 1993, Ontario's unemployment rate, as I said earlier, is at 10.8%. Alberta now is lower at 9.9%, British Columbia lower at 10.3%, Manitoba lower at 9.6% and Saskatchewan lower at 8.7%.

1540

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Everybody's lower.

Mr Phillips: Certainly when the member said, "Everybody is lower," all of the western provinces are lower, and in fact it was I think about a year ago, if my memory serves me right, that for a period of time New Brunswick's unemployment rate dipped lower than Ontario's unemployment rate.

The point I'm making here is the one that we've made before, and that is that, as important as the deficit is, as important as it is to have the battle to fight and fight the deficit, I would argue that there is perhaps a higher priority, and that is how we create a climate where we can begin to make significant inroads into this unemployment situation.

I think it's important to focus on, because in many respects Friday's employment numbers were greeted in some quarters as: "Well, the problem's over. It looks like the problem's solved. We're well on the way to solutions, so why worry?" I would say to the members in the Legislature that I don't believe that to be the case. Unfortunately, I don't believe it to be the case. I think we make a mistake if we take our eye off this issue. I think we make a mistake if we don't make this a higher priority than the deficit.

What are the solutions? Well, I think some of them are at hand. There is no doubt that the whole issue of training and of skills development and having a workforce that is future-oriented is important. We'll be dealing I guess shortly with something we call here Bill 96, the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. I think members know that we have some questions about OTAB. I think there's a fundamental flaw in it.

Having said that, I think that somehow or other we

have to get on with this whole issue of training and development. I hope it is not as serious a flaw as we believe it to be, because the government is going to go ahead with it anyway; yet I think members know it essentially, in my mind, isolates training and development and lifelong learning skills from what should be a continuum of learning.

It sets up an independent agency, what we call around here a schedule 4 agency, and I think it's a mistake. It has a 22-person board that will make the decisions, and we'll have a continuum and then suddenly we stop and this independent board takes over. I think, as I say, it's wrong. But in any event, we've got to get on with the training. The government has been promising for a couple of years now some vehicles for what are called patient capital investment funds. We should be looking at that.

I think there's no doubt that we have to instill some sense of confidence out there, and if I could fault the Premier on what's been going on in the last little while, I think there's a sense of chaos in the province. I hope that's not too strong a word, but when you have this level of uncertainty, I don't think there's much doubt that people are apprehensive of the future.

I don't talk to anyone who doesn't say: "I have personally retrenched. I have things that I might have done six months ago I'm not doing now, whether it be expanding my business, whether it be renovating, whatever it might be." People are in a pessimistic mood, and we won't get the economy rolling until people have that sense of confidence.

I wanted to touch briefly on the other side of the equation on the bill. We've had, I think, a good debate around this bill on the expenditure side, but I don't think we'll begin to tackle the enormous appetite for borrowing that the government has until we begin to fix the revenue side of it, which is getting the economy rolling. A key component of that is somehow or other creating a climate where we see significant numbers of jobs created, and those no doubt will be in the private sector.

I will conclude my remarks there on this important bill and look forward to further debate and the vote.

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I'd just like to commend the member for Scarborough-Agincourt on the breadth of his knowledge in this particular area and on putting facts before us as we debate this very important bill.

As the member for Scarborough-Agincourt pointed out, it's only a one-page bill. At first glance it doesn't seem all that substantial, but we're talking about borrowing \$16 billion that eventually will have to come back out of the taxpayers' pockets as we repay that interest and principal.

But the question I'm asked most often by my consti-

tients and by people in this city is: How could we get to this stage when we're having to borrow sums like \$16 billion on the flick of a wrist? We remember back to the year 1990 when there was the first budgetary surplus in 20 years in Ontario's history, a \$20-million surplus projected for that year. How did we get to the stage now where \$10 billion is the accepted norm? In fact, the government is, I believe, with its expenditure control plan and its social contract legislation, trying to get back to—what is it?—\$12 billion? That is now acceptable as the norm in Ontario; it is not acceptable to me.

I think every member of this House agrees that restraint is in order, but I remember back to 1991, when the NDP government made the decision that it was not going to fight the recession on the backs of the people, that it was going to spend its way out of the recession. They made a momentous mistake that year when they decided not to act with restraint. They created this chaos, they created this problem and today we're having to ask for authority to borrow \$16 billion to correct their mistakes. That's unacceptable.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I always enjoy listening to any debate by my colleague the member for Scarborough-Agincourt. He always brings something very cogent to the debate. However, I really would like to comment on any discussion of the Liberals bringing in the only balanced budget in the last 20 years. Let us just examine the circumstances under which that was brought in.

That year, they budgeted—I emphasize the word “budgeted”—for a deficit of some \$550 million. However, due to a very unusually large and unanticipated transfer from the federal government of \$888 million, they were able to show a surplus, but interestingly enough, they showed a surplus of \$90 million. In other words, had they not received \$888 million, they would have been more in the hole than they had budgeted for as a deficit. In other words, they were involved in the spot-on mechanics of fiscal control that we know this present Treasurer is involved in. That is how approximate it has been.

Let us have no doubt: No party of any political stripe should take any pleasure in the way this government or any other government has controlled the economy, because we're piling up debt for our children. That is unacceptable and we must all say we're going to change this so that our children don't pay for our extravagances.

Once again, when the Liberals are saying how responsible they were, they weren't; it was a pure fluke. We know that in the last election they promised us a surplus; we got a deficit.

1550

Mr Sutherland: To start with, let me say that I concur with the member for Scarborough-Agincourt in

talking about how serious a problem unemployment is, because if we are to have a true recovery and if we are to deal with the serious financial situation the government faces, we do have to get people back to work. I think this government's record on job creation in terms of capital investment, in terms of supports through Jobs Ontario Training, in terms of helping single parents through providing extra day care spaces, and a whole range of other initiatives, this government has taken shows that we are very serious about dealing with the unemployment issue.

The member for Scarborough-Agincourt talked about how unemployment was recognized as a major issue at the G-7 summit. I must say that I myself was quite surprised to hear our new Prime Minister, having been in government since 1988, finally recognize the fact too that unemployment is a major issue in this country. I'm not sure where she has been for the last five years and what has finally made her come to that conclusion, but it is quite clear that if all the provinces are going to be able to deal with the issue of unemployment, then we do need to have some leadership at the federal level.

I'm sure the member for Scarborough-Agincourt would acknowledge the fact that we haven't seen that leadership in terms of trying to work with the provinces in a coordinated way, whether that's a national infrastructure program or whether that's other changes to the destructive policies that have created a great deal of unemployment, in this province particularly.

The fact is that the federal government, while this province has suffered the most and was starting to suffer even before we came into power, has not seen fit to ensure that Ontario receives its fair share in terms of trying to deal with the issue of unemployment.

Mr Bradley: I was very pleased to hear the speech of the member and I wanted to mention to him that the only absence I found in the speech was any reference to blue box funding for the Niagara region. I know the member is very concerned about that, because it says in the St Catharines Standard:

“The province's silence on its two-year-old offer of funding for blue box recycling has eight Niagara municipalities bristling with anger.

“The municipalities, including Niagara-on-the-Lake, Lincoln, Pelham, Grimsby, Niagara Falls, Welland, Port Colborne and Wainfleet, have received no word from the province since early February when they wrote a letter inquiring about the funding status, said Welland's environmental services engineer, Don Cook....

“Hanging in the balance is \$284,000 in ‘enhanced’ funding the province offered in 1991 to help pay the cost of municipalities’ blue box programs.

“The province is also holding back another \$568,000 that would help defray their blue box costs to the spring of last year.

"The situation"—as the member for Scarborough-Agincourt would know—"has left the eight municipalities—all members of a regional 'recycling club'—feeling 'completely frustrated' with the province's Ministry of Environment and Energy....

"We are frustrated right down to the nth degree, added Wainfleet's treasurer, Al Guilier.

"The enhanced funding package—the most generous of its kind offered anywhere in the province—was put forward by the ministry in 1991 as an incentive for all 12 Niagara municipalities, including St Catharines, to reach an agreement to work together on blue box recycling."

That's why I was complimentary of it at that time. Being fairminded as I am, I said, "Here is a good package being offered." I just anticipated that having offered this, putting it forward as an incentive, the government would follow through.

Now I find, to my disappointment and to the disappointment of the member for Scarborough-Agincourt, that they have not heard from the province. Perhaps through my intervention this afternoon we will hear something from the ministry in the near future.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Scarborough-Agincourt, you have two minutes.

Mr Phillips: I appreciate the comments of all the members. I had planned to get to the point the member for St Catharines was raising, but I think the House is anxious to get on to debate some additional bills shortly, so I had to omit that.

I just want to comment on the point the member for Oxford raised, and that's that one of our problems is—and I think maybe it's a problem that's particular to Canada, or at least we seem to dwell on it a lot—with our three levels of government, we all tend to blame some other level. It's convenient. But I would say to the member for Oxford that the one thing you can't dispute is that Ontario did have the lowest unemployment rate, by far, and now we find that there are four provinces with a lower unemployment rate. So whenever the Premier says, "It's free trade and it's the policies of the Conservative government in Ottawa," I say that certainly free trade has had an impact, there can be no doubt about that, but how can it be that we've gone from the lowest rate of unemployment to the fifth lowest rate?

One of the other members raised the issue of the spending and the surpluses and what not. We'll be into endless debates about this with all three parties pointing a finger at each other. The only thing I can do is to take the independent Provincial Auditor—this is an individual and an organization that is independent; I don't think any of us have ever questioned their objectivity. They did say that Ontario's had only one surplus in 20 years, and that was the year that ended March 31, 1990. So that's the number I use, and I would defend the

auditor's objectivity on that and that's irrefutable.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I'd like to make a few brief comments with respect to this loan bill, which is Bill 25, which was introduced in May 1993, and second reading was just recently given, I believe last week.

This is certainly a routine borrowing bill which, it has been said throughout, "authorizes the borrowing of up to \$16 billion...for the consolidated revenue fund." I'm reading from the explanatory note of the bill. "It is expected that the public capital markets and the Canada pension plan will be the principal sources of funds," which, of course, troubles a lot of people, when you hear that the Canada pension plan will be the principal source of funds, particularly when this debt will ultimately have to be paid back.

The other interesting thing with this bill is that the authority expires at the end of December 1994, which I believe is a little longer than what these bills normally take.

This year, the New Democratic government is seeking authority, as was read in the explanatory note, to borrow up to a maximum of \$16 billion on the credit of the consolidated revenue fund. It has been said to some extent, but I'd like to emphasize exactly where some of this breakdown is because I think it's useful to know that before we vote on the bill.

The actual borrowing requirement for 1993-94, from information we've received, is projected at \$11.4 billion. That's the actual borrowing requirement for the forthcoming year. Of that \$11.4 billion, that's composed of \$6.1 billion for the operating account, \$3.1 billion for the capital spending, \$1.1 billion for alternative financing arrangements in new loans, and \$1.1 billion for the refinancing of maturity debt. Then there are retirements in the current year which are projected at \$1.1 billion.

Every once in a while you hear politicians and non-politicians philosophizing on the deficits that keep increasing in this provincial government and in the federal government, at all levels of government, and of course there are new pieces of legislation that are now going to allow municipalities, school boards and hospitals to also have deficit funding. In other words, the expansion of debt is going to increase, and I think that concerns people.

We look at the general confidence of the public in this government, which is now seeking legislation to borrow a maximum of \$16 billion; a very strange time to talk about that, particularly when we've just passed Bill 48, which was opposed by both opposition parties and a smattering of New Democratic members. This government has lost the confidence of the entire union movement across this province. It has lost the confidence of small business. I don't even know who their friends are.

1600

When you start looking at the philosophy of how we finance things, every once in a while people suggest that maybe we should keep a lid on things, that maybe we shouldn't be spending so much, that there should be substantial reductions. I'll tell you, it's hard to talk in this House about agreeing to a bill to borrow up to \$16 billion when the lack of confidence has simply disappeared. I know that this government and the federal government, all governments, are saying that the recession is over. Well, I don't know; I don't think it's over. There are still a lot of people losing their jobs. The very fact that we're putting forward legislation such as Bill 48 and Bill 50, which is going to have a major effect on the health system in this province, shows that this government is convinced that the recession is not over.

Yet it continues to spend, wild spending programs. I give one that has troubled me since I've become elected in this House, that is, the housing policy of this province. I'm not going to let you forget about it. I'm not going to let you forget about the fact that in Ontario we're going to be hitting a billion dollars in annual operating subsidies—a billion dollars—in just two more years, when Queen's Park just put forward a budget that we've never seen in this province, that I don't think any provincial government has ever seen, a budget that has just shocked everyone from all levels.

We're looking at all of these financial matters, and then all of a sudden—well, not all of a sudden; I think the bill was introduced on May 19, but it's been sitting there until last week, when we started talking about this bill.

There is the recession going on. There is the continued wild spending, and I give housing as an example. I give the unbelievable waste going on in the health system; there are critics for the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party who know much more about that topic than I, but clearly there are unbelievable examples of waste in our health system. Yet the fear that's been generated with Bill 50 is another example that certainly the entire medical profession does not have confidence in this government.

Looking at the confidence in this government from within and the confidence in this government from without, would you loan substantial amounts of money, whether it be bonds or anything else, to the province of Ontario? It's been made clear to us from people in the bond business that unless this government is able to demonstrate more than what it's been doing with respect to fiscal management and restraint, it's going to have a great deal of difficulty in selling more bonds with respect to the province of Ontario.

The Ontario budget has just terrified people outside this province. Bill 48 has just terrified people outside this province. Can you trust a government that unilat-

erally breaks contracts, opens up contracts that have been negotiated, hard-fought in negotiations? I know Bill 48 is law, but we're looking at the series of bills that go back, and I could reiterate the various expenditures and the increases in the budget not only in taxes but in fees. When you add it all up, they are just making it more and more difficult to invest in this province. And I believe the \$16 billion is the most that this province has ever floated with respect to a loan act.

People in this province and outside this province are terrified with respect to the loss of their jobs, the loss of their homes, the loss of ability to maintain the family unit because of the economy. I know the government doesn't have the full blame for that. There are probably a whole series of governments, the federal government, the municipal government and the provincial government, that are the cause of the unbelievable bureaucracy that's been increasing more and more over the years.

The province's total direct debt by the current fiscal year-end is projected at \$78.6 billion. That's at the current fiscal year-end; that's what the debt will be in this province, \$78.6 billion. That's \$7,638 per capita. That's up from last year, \$68.6 billion, so it's increased roughly \$10 billion in a year.

I know the government's trying restraints. I know the Treasurer and the Premier are standing up in this House and saying that they're cutting. I know seriously that there's a small group among the front bench that has pushed Bill 48, and somehow they got their backbenchers to support it. But just keep in mind, the wild spending is continuing, and I give the example of the housing policy, which I don't really think we can afford to get into.

You can say it's like a broken record, hearing this topic from me over and over. Almost every time I stand up in the House, it's to criticize this government with respect to its housing policies. But facts are facts, and yet you're coming today for third reading to ask authority that this province can borrow up to \$16 billion. I don't know. The confidence in the government has reached an unbelievably low ebb with respect to Bill 48, and the people are getting more and more cynical. Now, of course, you're coming forward and saying, "We must have \$16 billion."

Over the past decade, Ontario debt levels have increased by 161%, while debt per capita has increased 126.3%. Over the same period, by comparison, personal income per capita has increased only 53.5%. So what the government is doing and what we're doing as individuals is not even close; personal income, what people are making and putting in their pockets, is substantially lower than what this government is spending.

Our debt is increasing and increasing, and it's not just the New Democratic government. It's the Liberal government and probably, if you went back far enough,

it would be the Conservative government. The question is, how are we going to stop all this? The government that's in power has an obligation to make a greater effort, certainly greater than what you're doing, to stop the increase in debt.

In the fiscal year 1992-93, the government of Ontario borrowed a total of \$16.6 billion in a wide range of markets, including its first venture into the global bond market, with a \$3-billion US issue in January 1993. Under the government's midterm fiscal plan, the budgetary deficit will be reduced over time; however, the province's debt level will increase—and this is a projection—from \$78.6 billion currently to \$90.1 billion by 1995-96.

That's about the time that the New Democratic Party will be calling an election, and you're going to have a hard time explaining what you've done to this province on this issue alone, aside from all the other policies you've been following. You have no support from any of your friends. The labour unions, which have traditionally supported you, have gone. They're not going to support you.

I don't know what the government's going to do. I don't know whether it's continuing to spend and to let the debts increase. They're saying, "We must all share; we must all have substantial tax increases," which we received in the last budget.

Then the Premier, of course, says, "We're going to have to also do something with our civil service." Yes, the Progressive Conservative Party agreed with that, yet it is rather ironic to watch all of the members of the New Democratic Party in this House support Bill 48, a bill which opened up the contracts which probably many of them negotiated themselves. Many of them were part of the negotiation of many of those contracts. It's a very strange world we live in.

1610

Then we have to look at Bill 17, which is still on the record to be passed, and that of course is the creation of new crown corporations. One of the things that Bill 17 is going to do is to pass on the management of the province's financing and debt management plans to be assumed by the Ontario Financing Authority, a new schedule 4 agency with the responsibility for implementing the government's new capital investment strategy. In other words, the debt of this province is moving over to this new crown agency, yet Bill 25 says that we need to borrow up to \$16 billion. It's very strange. Those two bills seem to contradict.

Of course, with Bill 17, what used to be called grants in this province, particularly with the school boards and the hospitals, are now loans. They are now owed. Any moneys over \$1 billion, with respect to the hospitals, are now owed to the new crown agency. The Ministry of Health has said, "We'll pay that on your behalf." But do you trust them? Do you trust a government, particu-

larly a government that's just passed Bill 48 that has simply broken contracts? These are very strange times we're going through, and I do ask the members of the House to consider the conflicting aspects of moving the debts of the province of Ontario not only to these crown agencies but to the hospitals and the school boards and, most of all, the municipalities.

I believe the Treasurer and his assistants and his advisers looked back and said: "We're at our capacity, so where else can we get credit? Well, we can get credit with the municipalities." And that's exactly what they're going to do.

The New Democratic government, when it was in opposition, used to chastise the Liberals for downloading. What the Liberals have done was nothing compared to what you're doing today in passing on the debt to the municipalities, the hospitals and the school boards, absolutely nothing.

I'm getting letters constantly, as I'm sure members of this House are getting. People are simply wondering how in the world they're going to operate their school boards and their municipalities. In Bill 48, there's an example with an amendment that literally surfaced in the final hours of the debate of Bill 48, as short as it was to debate in this House; one of the most important bills in this House and we hardly had time to debate it.

I know I'm varying slightly from the topic of a loan bill that is asking permission to borrow, but it does get back to the whole issue of confidence, as to whether or not people are going to invest in provincial bonds from outside and within.

I'll tell you, the bills are coming fast and furious, and all the rumours flying around in this place today are that the bills are going to fly around even faster and more furious. We're going to see time allocation on bills that we've never seen before. When you people were in opposition you would have pulled your hair out in absolute horror at what is being planned to ram through the half dozen to dozen bills that are going to be put forward in this place with very little debate.

In any event, my concern is with respect to the fear of the school boards about how they're going to operate. A news release came out from the Ontario Public School Boards' Association and another one came out from the Peel Board of Education at about the same time as we were voting on Bill 48, and they had to do with the amendments. It was an amendment to section 33 of Bill 48 which would allow unions to unilaterally extend the terms of existing collective agreements until the end of the social contract period. We all know that collective bargaining—

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: We are not debating Bill 48 today, and the member is debating Bill 48. Can we stick to the subject we're to deal with?

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): I want to remind the honourable member that we are dealing with the money bill. I would certainly like him to stay on topic.

Mr Tilson: Mr Speaker, you're quite right, that I am talking about Bill 48 and I am talking about collective bargaining, or what used to be collective bargaining in this place. I'm also talking about confidence to invest in the province of Ontario, because that's what this bill is all about, that we need money, we need \$16 billion to make this place work, and we're going to be going out and having bonds. Quite frankly, as has been indicated, unless you people start showing some restraint and some good fiscal management, you're not going to get your bond investment, you're not going to get your loans, because no one's going to invest in this province.

I can tell you that it affects the whole fabric of our society, whether it be education, whether it be municipal, whether it be health. I mean, the member's quite right; I'm talking about Bill 48, which has already passed. But I'm also talking about confidence, and I say I have every right in this world, in this House, I would hope, to speak on the topic of confidence and how it is being completely lost. No one wants to invest in this province. Everyone's afraid of the power of the unions. Everyone's afraid of the disappearance of the small business. Everyone's afraid of this philosophy of this government, that this government thinks it can do everything for all people, and they're finding out that they can't; hence, the passing of Bill 48.

They've suddenly reversed their stance. What did they do with their first budget, their 1991 budget? They said: "We're going to spend our way out of this recession. We're going to increase the deficit from \$3 billion to \$10 billion." That's what the Treasurer in this place said, and I'll tell you, he has now reversed his position, and we're all paying for it. Everyone in the civil service is paying for it; everyone in private enterprise is paying for it. They're political and philosophical policies that aren't working.

The school boards are very worried because the school boards have said that there is no way for school boards to absorb the social contract cuts unless they're free to negotiate with unions during the social contract term and to cooperatively find ways to make the social contract cuts and other reductions in the province's transfer payments to education. They're saying, "We can't make it work." So the member's quite right: I'm talking about Bill 48. But I am going to be referring to Bill 48 until you're turfed out of office, because what you've done to this province is absolutely disgraceful.

I would just like to refer to a couple more points with respect to, again, people who have written me expressing their lack of confidence in this province. I'm just going to refer to one letter. I know it'll get the ire of the member, but he's going to have to bear with me

because, again, the intent of reading this letter is to show how more and more people are losing confidence in this government and there's no way that they're going to be preparing within and without to loan to the province of Ontario \$16 billion, notwithstanding the fact, from our information, they're going to need \$11.8 billion, I think, although they're asking for \$16 billion.

This letter came from a member, someone in my riding. I won't give their name, but it came from the Mansfield area. They talked about their dismay with respect to Bill 48.

"The costs are only being deferred for three years. If the civil service is able to do their work in 12 fewer days per year, why not get rid of the excess employees now? Instead, there will be the same number of employees in three years as there are now"—

Mr Huget: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: We are debating Bill 25, An Act to authorize borrowing on the credit of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and not Bill 48. That member persists in debating Bill 48. I would ask that we deal with the bill at hand.

The Acting Speaker: The member does touch on relative information pertaining to the borrowing, which is part of Bill 25. The member will please resume his participation in the debate.

1620

Mr Tilson: I quite concur that Bill 25 consists of four sections and one page. It simply says they want the permission to borrow \$16 billion for the consolidated revenue fund, which is going to spend all of the foolish policies you're getting into in the forthcoming year. I have every right to speak on all of your anticipated goofy plans you have to destroy this province, including Bill 48. Where was I?

My letter that came from my constituent in Mansfield was concerned with the costs being deferred for three years. He indicated: "Instead, there will be the same number of employees in three years as there are now, at which time they will receive their 6% back along with all their lost experience pay. This will probably cost whoever is in power at that time an increase of close to 10% to 15% in one year." So the debt is going to increase, and it's going to be one awful mess in 1995 when these people leave office. This person is quite right.

He says, "Pare the excesses now," which was the philosophy of Mike Harris, our leader, when he put forward a number of amendments to Bill 48, none of which were accepted by this government, none of which were even mentioned by this government as being adequate to support the way in which the Progressive Conservative Party would recommend the cutting back of the provincial debt.

The person goes on by saying: "We all know that there are excesses in the system. The government should

be reducing its budget by tackling these problems now, not by deferring them to another government. Make the school boards more efficient. End the duplication of busing, audio-visual, psychiatric services, trustees etc by combining or amalgamating boards in the same region. Cut some of the frill programs to keep the students in the classroom instead of out on numerous field trips and sports activities. Merge the hospitals and have every hospital specialize in a few treatments instead of every hospital possessing expensive equipment for all areas of treatment." This individual went on, and those are some of the suggestions he made.

I have a pack of letters that heavy of people who are making recommendations, and I'm sure the same letters are going to members of the government and all members of this House as recommendations by the members of the public as to how costs should be cut down. Yet the future seems to be, with Bill 25, that we're going to continue to spend. We're going to spend at least \$16 billion, and that is unacceptable.

Mr Bradley: I wish to speak briefly on this bill, which deals with the borrowing of funds in Ontario for various purposes. One of the areas where I think there's a good deal of concern about expenditures by government and whether they're sufficient or not is in the area of the provision of justice.

Members of the House will be aware that the people of St Catharines, and indeed I suspect of much of Ontario and the country, have had a focus of attention on what is happening in terms of the justice system in our community.

I have had a large number of calls, as have other members of the Legislature, about the provision for justice in our province, about the adequacy of the justice system to deal with issues that are before it. The expectations that the general public in my area have of the justice system and how it is appropriately being funded and operated are certainly many.

I can tell members of the House that there is a good deal of concern, there's a good deal of anger and there's a good deal of anxiety about the justice system and whether it is operating appropriately. We had a decision which was rendered last week by a member of the judiciary, and that decision has certainly had a marked effect on people in our community, a large number who have contacted constituency offices and others to indicate they are dissatisfied with the dispensing of justice in this particular case.

Also, there has been concern expressed about the suggestion by the Attorney General, Ms Marion Boyd, that the media and not the public are angry about events surrounding the trial in St Catharines relating to the taking of the lives of Kristen French and Leslie Mahaffy and these have provoked frustration and disbelief on the part of a number of people in my constituency. So I can convey to the members of the Legislature that this

concern is genuine; it is not simply the concern which is expressed by the news media, but certainly by residents in my area.

I want to indicate that I believe that there are many areas within the justice system where the lack of adequate resources has resulted in those who are involved in prosecutions having to deal with those prosecutions in a way they would prefer not to. In other words, the court system can accommodate only so many people in terms of the trials that are held, in terms of the cases that proceed. Because of clogged courts, because of a lack of adequate resources to deal with these matters, in fact, it has been a practice for people to engage in various kinds of plea bargaining and other discussions between the defence and the prosecution to reach some kind of accommodation whereby a trial can proceed, and it may or may not influence the proceedings with another trial.

I would say that the people in my part of the province would want to see adequate funding from this bill, which allows for the borrowing of, I believe, \$16 billion, given to the police forces in this province to deal with crime and to the justice system to deal with the various trials that are before them. I know I express the views of my constituents. I share with the members of the House the views of my constituents.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don't believe we have a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: Could the clerk check for a quorum, please.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for St Catharines can resume his participation in the debate.

Mr Bradley: The Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services, who is sitting in the House today, I know would probably be appreciative of the fact that there is considerable support for any initiatives that he and his ministry might wish to undertake to expand the opportunity for police in this province to be able to fight crime. He holds both the positions of Solicitor General and corrections minister and I would suspect that if sufficient resources were available for the Ministry of the Solicitor General, not as many resources would be necessary for the ministry of corrections.

I did, in the brief time that I have available to me this afternoon, want to share with members of this House the very genuine anguish of people in the community of St Catharines over happenings related to the Kristen French and Leslie Mahaffy killings and ultimately the judicial action which has taken place since then, and for members to know that's a very strong feeling in our

community, and that I believe there is very considerable support for providing those resources to police forces and to the justice system so that the expectations that people have of our police forces and their ability to fight crime and to conduct investigations and the expectations of our people as to how the court system should work can, in fact, be realized.

1630

Mr Sutherland: I want to thank the two members for participating in the third reading debate. As I say, I think we've had a very extensive discussion in second reading.

The member for Scarborough-Agincourt brought up the issue of unemployment, and as I said in response to that, this government is very serious about dealing with the issue of unemployment.

I think I would disagree with some of the comments made by the member for Dufferin-Peel and just say once again that in terms of dealing with all the economic issues that this province faces, cooperation and partnership by the federal government in ensuring that Ontario, being the largest province and having traditionally been the largest contributor to the economy—that their partnership and willingness to work with the province in trying to get people back to work and help all of us solve our economic issues would go a long way in improving the situation for everyone and I think also, in the long term, ensure that this government wouldn't need to borrow as much money.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Mr Sutherland has moved third reading of Bill 25. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour please say "aye."

All those opposed please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. I declare the motion carried.

I do resolve that the bill do now pass and be proclaimed as in the motion.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ EN MATIÈRE D'EMPLOI

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 79, An Act to provide for Employment Equity for Aboriginal People, People with Disabilities, Members of Racial Minorities and Women / Loi prévoyant l'équité en matière d'emploi pour les autochtones, les personnes handicapées, les membres des minorités raciales et les femmes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The honourable member for Scarborough North, I believe, had the floor.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): Well, no, I'll be starting my debate, Mr Speaker.

If there is any important bill that has passed through

this House that had its first reading and that has been awaited with such anticipation, it is this Bill 79. It has been watched by many hoping that it will bring into place the necessary requirements, that the designated groups that are identified in this bill would have some of the injustice be addressed. So I take this opportunity to speak on this bill at length, and I hope too, as I address this bill, that it will be adhered to and listened to in a manner where the government of the day would see the necessity of the concerns of all the individual groups there.

We know that this concept of employment equity—that's what Bill 79 is all about. If we go back in history, not too far back, Judge Rosalie Abella in her royal commission report in 1984 coined the term "employment equity." Although it's quite appropriate in some respects, I have some sort of concern about the term itself. I think that employment equity on its own will not bring about the kind of equities that are of concern to the designated groups. Employment equity on its own will not do that; we'd have to have other equity in the system of access so that people who are employed would be able to be recognized for some of their abilities there.

I recall some time ago—and I'm not too long a member in this House—when we were in government at the time and the Liberal Party was addressing the concern about employment equity. I recall my colleague from Scarborough-Agincourt, the Honourable Gerald Phillips of the day, putting together consultations and hoping to bring forward some rather effective employment equity legislation. That, we found, was quite complex and took some time for the consultation process.

Later on, the other minister, Bob Wong, had taken on, from Fort—his riding doesn't come to mind—

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): Fort York.

Mr Curling: —Fort York. He also addressed that concern. The mantle was then placed on the current minister. I would say she and I have had some consultations and discussions, and I've come to appreciate some of the things that's she doing. I've also come to appreciate the fact that if she was maybe given the kind of tools to do the job, we'd have had better legislation and better regulations coming forth.

I say this with authority, and she would appreciate that, that having come to know her over the years, I think she has good intentions—I think I said that at first reading—but I don't think she got the cooperation from her colleagues in cabinet to bring something that is worthwhile for us to address the great concern that the designated groups identified here could have had.

When we were government and the then leader of the party, now the Premier of the province, the Honourable Bob Rae, brought forward a private member's bill—as

a matter of fact, many of us thought this rather bold in the things he wanted to address there—this private member's bill provided for the legislation of employment equity for women, people with disabilities, native people and visible minorities. In that private member's bill, I recall that he had imposed fines of \$100,000 to \$200,000 for first and subsequent infringements on the legislation. These were tough and forward-moving decisions he had made.

He said also in that bill, the bill would have applied to all employers in the private and the public sectors that have payrolls of over \$300,000 per annum. So when the government came into place and the then leader was put in place, in great anticipation, I thought it was easy then—that was in 1990—to use as a premise the private member's bill and from that expand accordingly. That was in 1990, as I said. We didn't hear anything about employment equity of any substance until about 1991, when I think the minister of the day announced some consultation process.

Again, of course, you, in your own right, in your own ideology, wanted to consult the people in the community. We waited and waited and alas—and I'm sure the minister of the day was very anxious to bring her employment equity bill forward, but what happened? It was not until June 1992 that we saw the first semblance of an employment equity bill.

I should tell you, I was extremely disappointed about this, because having waited so long, the legislation was rather weak. We could not even comment on it, because most things were left to regulation. The definition of the things and the action that will be taken were left up to regulations. So at the time, again, with the patience of the Liberal Party, my party, we waited.

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs): You were asleep at the switch.

Mr Curling: We fell asleep because there was nothing in the first bill for us to put our hands on to say, "Is this employment equity?" We were told that regulations would be forthcoming, and "Consultations are being done at the moment in order to bring about good employment equity legislation and regulation."

It was not until a year after, June of this year, that the regulations came about. Again we were extremely disappointed, because having read the regulation itself, I found it rather vague and rather incomplete. Some of the issues that we had hoped would give some light, some definition, some substance to the legislation are still not there.

1640

Of course, as you know, the regulation was released outside, so we had no time to debate the regulation. Today gives me that opportunity to address some concerns. I will then come later on to talk about some

of the areas of the regulation which we are not happy with one bit.

We know that the purpose of the bill is to achieve equitable representation for women, natives, disabled persons and visible minorities in all job levels throughout the workplace by eliminating discrimination.

A rather interesting thing about which I expressed some concern earlier on is that the francophones were excluded from this. It is unfortunate that they were excluded from this Bill 79. I know that, of course, in employment equity for the public service the francophones are included, but I am disappointed that it was not addressed here in this one. I understand that at a later date some legislation will be in place to address the francophone employment equity aspect of the bill.

The fact is that I had hoped too that the francophone representative in the caucus of the government would have spoken out loudly about the inequities here in regard to the francophones, but we didn't hear a peep out of him.

Hon Mr Pouliot: What am I supposed to do, beat them up?

Mr Curling: He may have said, should he beat them up if they are—it seems to me he's indicating then that he must have spoken and somehow they did not even listen to him. It's unfortunate, because the Minister of Transportation, who is a francophone representative, expounds in the House when he's asked questions in the House, defending his ministry, sometimes adequately and most of the time not sufficiently to justify the questions we ask in the House.

I presume that if his performance is the same as he has defended the Transportation ministry, I would say the francophones are not properly represented then and are not being heard at the cabinet table. Hence, I'm not surprised at all that the francophone community is excluded out of this. I don't intend to see any progressive legislation in defending the francophone situation. I'm disappointed that's not in the legislation.

People in this province and in this country have waited so long for things to be addressed or their concerns to be addressed in a tangible manner. They have seen failures of equity situations addressed in the Human Rights Commission from the point of view that the backlog that is there has shown justice is being delayed two to three years, which falls under the same minister; as I say, under the same minister.

It is unfortunate that people who are waiting to have their concerns addressed would have to be waiting in the same respect with this legislation that we see here. We're going to see backlog. We see a big bureaucracy. As a matter of fact, what I see from this legislation is a creation of a bureaucracy. In the minister's own words, "at a cost of about \$31 million," to create this Employment Equity Commission. Those are the figures, Madam

Minister, that I've heard and seen from your presentations.

What's going to happen is that the backlog will be very much there too. I want to warn people out there who are looking forward to this employment equity bill and this legislation coming into place that the first case that would ever come about, I assume, will be somewhere in about three to four years' time. Before anyone can bring any cases of employment equity concern before the commission, as you know, it may be 18 months or two years after this legislation is in place, and that was said from 1992. Now it's 1993, we are now in second reading and we have seen a regulation that is pretty weak in itself.

As a matter of fact, let me speak a little bit about the regulation from a processing point. I understand that in the process, when the regulation is being introduced or presented to the committee, it will be there as evidence, but we cannot amend it.

This is a very important piece of legislation, one of the most important pieces of legislation that may have come through this House. Human rights legislation is very important legislation. None of my colleagues on the opposite side are able to make any amendments to that regulation, which we see at the moment as pretty weak. It's unfortunate that when it is presented in the committee, we are only able to use it as a reference. That's not good enough, Madam Minister. If you are progressive and your government is progressive, I think you should put that regulation there for us to put our amendments forward, because we would have many, many amendments to this regulation, if that would be accepted.

I hope that even when it comes forward for acceptance, when it comes forward to the committee for any assessment, it will not be done like Bill 48, where we'll be pushed for time allocation. Then if we have regulation amendments, what will happen is that we'll have to take your amendments as read. I'm sure you will have amendments to your regulation. Hence you call it your draft regulation. You will have amendments to that regulation, and you know perfectly well why that is so. Many of the interest groups today are telling you that this is not a good regulation, and furthermore, it doesn't even strengthen the weak legislation you've put forward. Therefore, amendments will be coming forward as soon as they put pressure on you, and I hope you respond and bend to the pressure or the concerns of those groups. Their concerns are very important and very legitimate.

The difficulty we have with this NDP legislation begins with the stated purpose of the bill, which is to ensure that every employer's workforce, in all occupational categories and at all levels of employment, reflects the representation of each of the designated groups in the general population. You know that is impossible to achieve, because employment equity

isolated just in the workplace, or equity alone, cannot bring about that kind of representation. You have to make sure that the other equity aspects are being dealt with, such as in the colleges, in the educational field, that those things are being looked after.

There is a definition I want to quote from here which is very important. In this report, which I'll come back to later, of the Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades in Ontario, there was a submission made by the Ontario Human Rights Commission, speaking about what role the government should play, and I quote:

"It is the public policy of the government to provide all persons in Ontario with equal rights and opportunities and to facilitate their full contribution to life in Ontario. The right to equal opportunity must be balanced against the right of members of our society to be confident that the services they receive, particularly in matters which involve their physical wellbeing, are rendered by qualified and capable individuals."

1650

The concerns people are talking about, merit itself, would be really addressed, because it is the responsibility of government, all governments, to make sure that the potential and the abilities of the people are being recognized in all aspects, through professional organizations, through the educational institutions. Therefore, when they arrive in the workplace there will be no question about merit.

My point, Madam Minister, is that you have to make sure access is being looked after in the professional field before we start to legislate employment equity, because there are many, many people now who are qualified but not recognized. As stated by the Ontario Human Rights Commission, it is the responsibility of the governments, whoever they are, to make sure these things are looked after.

That is why the Ontario Human Rights Code is such important legislation. I read from what it states here, which is so important to the discussion. It said in 1981:

"The Ontario Human Rights Code plays an essential role in any full consideration of the rights and concerns of individuals trained outside Canada and attempting to gain access to their professions or trades in Ontario.

"From our perspective, a review of human rights legislation in this province is significant in two ways.

"First, some disappointed candidates who seek admission to or certification by a profession or occupational association rely on the code's provisions for remedies. It is therefore necessary to consider how the code is being applied and whether the mechanism is satisfactory.

"Second, although the issues raised in relation to foreign-trained professionals and tradespeople attempting to enter the Ontario workforce can be characterized in large part as employment issues, a human rights

dimension clearly exists. The Human Rights Commission was created along with the code and charged, among other things, with the duty to forward the policy that the dignity and worth of every person be recognized and that equal rights and opportunities be provided without discrimination that is contrary to law."

The fact is that there are people in our community who are systemically being discriminated against and are being shut out of that system. You have to deal with that. Bringing about legislation like this not only insults what the people are fighting for, but it should make sure they are looked after in those institutions and recognized for their qualifications.

The argument is that if you discriminate against an individual because of where the individual is trained, it is a discrimination against origin; that debate has been made in the Human Rights Code for a long time. Some have been failing, but I think as soon as they continue to knock at the door, they will win the case about discrimination against origin and the case can be made.

The point I'm making, Madam Minister, is that having employment equity like this in isolation is extremely ineffective. It will not resolve the problems we have in the workplace.

We believe employment equity must guarantee equal access to employment opportunities and of course it must be free from arbitrary obstruction. We have to deal with all the barriers that are there.

We in the Liberal Party oppose the use of hiring quotas. As soon as the government hears "quotas," it runs for cover. It's funny that they didn't do that in the past, because they were talking about quotas; our good friend Mr Silipo used to speak about quotas, and we can show you evidence of the time he talked about quotas. Now they don't talk about quotas.

The legislation fails to clearly distinguish between what they call "goals and timetables" and quotas. We know that the wide-ranging powers that have been given to the employment commissioner and the Employment Equity Tribunal make the imposition of quotas a very real possibility, because if you ask an employer to put a timetable and goals of what they want to accomplish and who they will employ, eventually it moves into quotas.

But of course they will dodge that. I remember the minister being asked about that in the House, to define that. If I recall, she said something of the nature that if an outside group imposes a number on the employer, it becomes a quota, but somehow, if they are determining goals and timetables themselves, it's not a quota. Eventually, what happens is that it evolves into a quota situation. As they would say, you can run but you can't hide from the fact that it is a quota situation. We are against quotas; we want to make that very plain. Become very explicit and define what you mean by

quotas and timetables and goals.

We know too, and you may have noticed it, that this legislation puts a great emphasis on paperwork. We know the bureaucrats who have drawn this up are expert in that. A whole lot of forms and details and a lot of paperwork will be involved. Just think about being an employer: They'd have to be making out all of these paper reports. The emphasis here seems not to be on people; the emphasis seems to be on paper, to make all of these reporting processes. Again, the fact is that the people who want the equity aspect to be addressed are not being addressed. The public is left wondering if employment equity becomes a numbers game.

Our party feels that Bill 79 is very much overbureaucratic. In order to comply with the proposed legislation, Ontario employees will have to deal with a massive amount of detail. Just to comply with the regulations will require employers to allocate much of their limited time and resources to administration, when maybe they could direct their resources to training, another aspect. The employer will be called upon for extensive record-keeping. Of course, it will take away the employer's ability to provide development and anti-discrimination programs which they could concentrate on.

As I read the regulations, they talk about the role assigned to bargaining agents. I think the role you're assigning to bargaining agents will make it more costly and more complicated, especially where there is more than one bargaining agent. For example, just imagine where there are four bargaining agents, unions, in one employer's jurisdiction; therefore, they would have four different people at the table representing individual unions. The employer would then have to assign four people from within his group to sit at that table too. Of course, those who do not belong to the bargaining unit, non-union people, are not represented at the table. I think it is said in the regulations that they will be consulted. I feel that they don't have proper representation; I don't see why they themselves could not have people at the table. But again, it is to bear more favour to the unions themselves, and I think people outside of the unions should have a moment, an appropriate time, to be at that table.

1700

The legislation fails to clarify or clearly explain what is meant by "joint responsibility." I couldn't find out what that means, and that joint responsibility is for implementing employment equity. The reason I point these out is because I hope the minister will change her mind about the draft regulations and that we will get an opportunity to make changes and make amendments to the regulations.

I know just going through this in detail is rather boring. The human part of it is the part that concerns me, because the fact is that we see this, and as I go through the regulations in the legislation and I see

where the people and the issues are not addressed properly, the people want to get down to: "How can we participate in this province? We have ability." How can we get around from the fact that people are accusing those who want an access, an entry into the workforce, are being regarded that they have no qualifications when in the meantime the government itself is inefficient and incompetent in looking after those other concerns?

The legislation does not provide time frames or even guidelines for the resolution of disputes.

Mrs Yvonne O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I do not believe there is a quorum present in the chamber.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Shall we ascertain if there is a quorum in the House?

Acting Table Clerk (Mr Franco Carrozza): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is present. I recognize the member for Scarborough North.

Mr Curling: I'm glad there are more people coming in to hear the concerns of the people of Ontario on this long-awaited bill.

As I said, one of the many concerns we have is that the legislation does not provide time frames or even guidelines for the resolution of disputes between the employer and the bargaining agent. If an employer and a bargaining agent cannot agree on an employment equity plan, it is said that the matter is to be referred to the commissioner, and there's no guideline with respect to how long this commissioner may take to resolve such a dispute.

Earlier on, I mentioned the long wait that people seem to almost get accustomed to in the Human Rights Commission and other areas and the courts, that justice is being delayed and so therefore their justice is being denied. But again here we are not having in the regulation to say when and how much time will be taken by this commissioner to resolve this dispute.

I want you to just think for a moment about the human aspect of it, because whenever we're dealing with legislation it seems to be rather abstract that this individual, who out of concern made an address to the Human Rights Commission, and the Human Rights Commission may feel that it is not something that they should address because it has an employment equity aspect to it and refers it to the Employment Equity Commissioner. The Employment Equity Commissioner takes his or her time, which is not legislated or stated in the regulation, and then they wait again. These are people who have lost their jobs, they've been denied promotion, and they have not been a part of that process, who are waiting for this bureaucracy to get its act together for a long time. Therefore, justice being delayed again is justice denied.

People are very sceptical. They don't believe that this government, or governments as a whole, are dealing with the issue of equity.

The role assigned to the commission and the tribunal I feel will lead to the creation of the same kind of backlog that we see all over, and I ask the minister again, seeing that they refused us to make the appropriate amendments to the regulation which would have taken care of that, to look at that to find out how best we can address that issue of that long delay that always seems to be confronted by those who are putting their case before those commissions.

The commission, it's said, has been given the job of policing thousands of Ontario businesses with little direction in terms of how to perform this function. I gather that those who are brought into this process are about 80% of the businesses, all those who have more than 50 employees. Therefore it's a huge job, and I'm just wondering who's going to police it. Of course you will say the commissioner or the commission will police it. I don't know how they're going to do this. I know of course you're asked to make a plan and then you're asked to submit a certificate after that plan. So people could be violating the act all along, even violating their own plan and people are being shut out, and there is nothing that is descriptive enough to tell me how you're going to police that. What is particularly troubling is the absence of any kind of time frame for any of these activities. It's not there.

A part that was rather interesting in this, Madam Minister, is that the commission will also be responsible for human rights complaints that involve an employment equity plan, which I mentioned earlier on. This duplication, at a time when your government has come in here and talked about social contract and saving all this money: You have a Human Rights Commission that is empowered to do the things that it should be doing about discrimination, and then you're going to set up another bureaucracy outside of that, which you say you deny, at \$31 million, which is completely unnecessary and could be carried out by the Human Rights Commission.

As a matter of fact, which I will get to—maybe I should mention that immediately. I would like to just bring to your attention, Mr Speaker, Achieving Equality. When they talk about the reform of the Human Rights Commission, as a matter of fact the idea that I'm giving you is no new idea, no new idea one bit, the idea of looking to reform the Human Rights Commission to make it more efficient.

I know you recall the Cornish report, Mr Speaker. As a matter of fact, if I hit mine, there's no dust on it. If I ask the minister to hit hers, I'm sure there's dust on it. Not a peep out of this minister since this report has come out to say whether or not what she has paid for out of taxpayers' money to reform the Human Rights

Commission to address inequities in the system, which she asked for, and none of the recommendations have been addressed. None. Not even looked at.

1710

I asked the minister at one stage if she had an opportunity to read this.

Hon Elaine Ziemba (Minister of Citizenship and Minister Responsible for Human Rights, Disability Issues, Seniors' Issues and Race Relations): Have you?

Mr Curling: I have read it in detail. Some of the things in there I don't agree with, but some of the things in there I feel make a lot of sense. One of the things in there that makes a lot of sense to me talks about what the task force recommends. "The task force recommends that a permanent, full-time equity rights tribunal be established to deal with human rights, pay equity and employment equity cases."

This is saving. When that government over there talks about saving, here is an area that you don't have to establish a big bureaucracy called Employment Equity Commission again. Some of the issues and the concerns that you're talking about could be addressed through this tribunal, but the fact is of course that these task forces are being commissioned just to keep the people quiet for the time being, "Because we're studying it."

Now the study is over. If you don't like this, Madam Minister, what you should do is call in Mary Cornish and tell her and tell the people that the recommendation will not be followed, or some are good or some are bad—but all that money to waste. I emphasize, not that I agree fully with these task force recommendations, but there are things in here that could help you to save money and stop wasting taxpayers' money by creating this great Employment Equity Commission that will not get anywhere and will take four years down the road before we even address any of the concerns.

I feel, of course, that the people are living in hope, feeling that it will be addressed. It will not be so. So I ask you and I plead with you for those who are shut out of the system: Strengthen the Human Rights Commission, "strengthen" meaning give it the resources that it needs. It's good law. I read it earlier on to tell you how important the Human Rights Code is and that it can use that kind of force, that kind of legislation to deal with the inequities.

I can't see how the Employment Equity Commission will be responsible for human rights complaints. Let me take you through this, because you can identify with that. An individual comes before the Human Rights Commission and that individual has some concerns, so he puts his case forward. The Human Rights Commission looks at it and tells that individual, "I think it has something to do with employment equity, although it has some human rights concerns." They pass it over to

this commission, this bureaucracy. The bureaucracy looks at it and the tribunal looks at it and they say, "We want to see if the people have made any reasonable effort." Again we don't know what "reasonable effort" means. They wait and they wait, no time frame, as I said, and "reasonable effort" is then considered: "Yes, I think that employer has done his or her best to address the plan they put forward there, but you may have a human rights case. Take it back to the Human Rights Commission."

Give me a break. This individual who has either been denied access or promotion, then has to wait for the case of the human rights with a huge backlog—three or four years sometimes is the wait there—tell me, is that justice? Is that fair to those individuals who have been shut out of the system so long, and then to address this you set up a bureaucracy of \$31 million and still the case cannot be—all you've done is passed it around with some paperwork. That's not fair.

I appeal to the government and I appeal to the minister. The Minister of Transportation asks me what more he can do. He's spoken to them and he didn't get the redress of the francophone community. I say to every backbencher, just as you were whipped into shape with Bill 48, some of you to tears because you don't believe in it and still voted for it, why don't you use some sort of principles now and say, "I believe in the human aspect of it and this will not work"?

Weak legislation is worse than having no legislation, because what you're going to do is make believe that this legislation is effective, and it is not. It drags them through a process of years, just to find out if an employer has addressed the concerns of its equity plan. It's not good enough, because women cannot wait any longer, the visible minorities that have been shut out cannot wait any longer, the disabled community waiting for access cannot wait any longer for the bureaucracy to be set up.

Today I heard the minister for trade—what's the new portfolio? They keep changing it. Ms Lankin had announced about having new curtains being bought as a job creation program and thought that was a huge announcement in the House today, while people are waiting with the qualifications and have been shut out of the process. I appeal to you, the backbenchers there, that if the ministers around the cabinet table are not making any progress on this, you can make some progress on this, because I know that you are all honourable and intelligent people—I hope—concerned, compassionate, caring and understanding that people want to have access to employment and are being denied because these barriers are put up.

I spoke of barriers in this House many times. I addressed my concern to the Minister of Labour, who is supposed to bring a law into place about all of those employment agencies, some of which continue to

discriminate. He promised, but alas, we saw and we continue to see no progress and no indication that he will do so.

You're bringing this legislation in and saying to us, "We are progressive," with the words of the minister who says she's delighted to share with this House one of the most progressive pieces of legislation that goes nowhere or a progressive commission that will address the concerns that will take years—

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): Where was employment equity from 1985 to 1990?

Hon Mr Pouliot: Your colleagues did you in from 1985 to 1990.

Mr Curling: Some of the colleagues on the other side will speak loudly about, "Where were you?" or "Where was the Liberal Party?" Let me tell you: If we ever entrenched this into partisan rhetoric over there, you know what would happen? The people who are shut out will continue to be shut out and bureaucracies created.

The fact is that some of the studies that are being done—let us adhere to them. As I speak without any partisan leanings, if we did neglect the access report, the task force on professionals and trades, and then this government comes into place and has the opportunity to applaud, which it did, this study and said it would implement it, my God, if the Liberal Party did not address it, why is the government not addressing it today? Have they fallen into the same rut? Are they catering to interest groups like the unions that, on the basis of this, have found out—

Laughter.

Mr Curling: —as they laugh a bit—that there are some things where you cannot only have basic interest groups you cater to as a government, but you serve all people, regardless of the interest groups? Because when we look at how they have addressed the issue of employment equity in regard to the trade unions, which I will discuss later on, that is another matter.

1720

I can remind you, if you have forgotten, that the construction industry is exempt from this employment equity, saying it is too complex.

Hon Ms Ziemba: No, it is not.

Mr Curling: The minister shakes her head and says, "No, it's not." I hope, in her response, that the construction industry is a part of this.

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, just to inform you, and I know that you know, but it's such an important part of the legislation that has been violated, you know the seniority rights are protected in the employment equity bill here for the unions. Are we going to address equity in a fair manner or are we just going to make sure that when negotiations go on with employers, with the unions, certain tradeoffs happen? Maybe Madam

Minister will explain to me if there are any tradeoffs that went on with the unions there.

This bill only deals, as I mentioned earlier on, with employment equity in the workplace. It doesn't touch on any other thing, as I mentioned, about access to schools and education and training, which is an extremely crucial part in ensuring that people obtain the requisite qualifications to enable them to apply for their choice.

You may recall, Madam Minister, as I bring to your attention, Vision 2000. It talks about how important the role of the colleges is. It talks about implementing educational equity, because to bring this in place in isolation of educational equity is not making any progress at all.

It states here, "Providing equitable access for diverse communities means reinforcing the colleges' commitment to equity, strengthening their community development focus and identifying ways to increase participation of a wide range of students, both adults and youth, by being flexible, innovative and open to change as possible."

It is important that the access is there. My background: As you know, I spent 14 years at a community college as a director of student services responsible for orientation and graduation. Seeing the students come in from the time they spent their two or three years through the process, I have watched programs that have limited certain individuals from coming in. I have watched people who were forming a line—take for example, if we don't deal with the systemic discrimination, we aren't going to address the issue of equity.

For instance, I will give you a story. I was standing in a line one day at the college. A young man from Trinidad of Asian extraction was standing in the line and he was in the ESL program line. I asked the young man what he was doing in this line for the ESL program. He said, "I was told by my instructor," or the course director, "to form that line to take his course, take English as a second language." I asked the young man, "Is English your first language or your second language?" He said, "English is my first language." I said, "Why are you lining up here then?" He said, "I was told to join this line because that is what I should get in order to do my first year of five credits."

To explain, let me tell you what happened about systemic discrimination and perception, because you see, this individual as I said was of Asian extraction, and they felt right away that he didn't speak English, that English was his second language. I have seen cases of students who have taken English as a second language—a waste of his time or her time. I'm telling you, we have to address those concerns in the colleges about who comes into what, what curriculum we have, what programs they are placed into. Having the legislation of equity in the workplace alone will not help.

I just want to quote one aspect from Vision 2000. It talks about quality and opportunity. It said, quoting from it: "We have included in our proposal mandate for the Ontario college system a commitment to education equity which has been defined as follows: Educational equity involves the identification and the removal of systemic barriers to the educational opportunities that discriminate against women, visible minorities, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, people living in poverty or members of other groups which have been identified as being underserved with respect to their needs for post-secondary education. Educational equity also involves the implementation of special measures and the application of the concept of reasonable accommodation when these are necessary to achieve and maintain a student group which is representative of the communities it serves."

What we find is that even in the educational institutions, it is not reflected when it comes to the courses. The fact is that putting the burden on the employer to say, "You must employ this group or this group or that group," when in the meantime there are discriminatory practices and systemic discrimination happening in the other areas, in the areas of the educational institutions, in the areas of the professional associations, which was an extensive study, which again the government refused to implement—this itself would release within the employment field many people who are professionally trained and many people who are able to perform and be worthwhile as individuals in our community.

Denying that is denying the presence of human rights. So I say to you, Madam Minister, if you yourself could work much harder in implementing the task force on access, you would be almost at the door to have better employment equity in the workplace, because what you would have done is you would have released qualified people, where the professional organizations have controlled for a long time who gets in, and who can be of service to the community at large.

I mentioned earlier on about the guarantee of union seniority rights. It effectively ensures that the promotion within an organization would be sealed off, that it's going to protect all those union jobs, a matter of seniority. Thus, the bill only addresses access in the workplaces and not access in higher-level ranks within an organization or company. Can you imagine, they invite you home and they tell you, of course, that you can come on downstairs but you're not allowed to go upstairs.

It is unfortunate, and I will bring this to you and I want you to see the relevance. Many times, the decisions are made in the upstairs area where the higher level of the bureaucracy or the higher level of the importance of the organization is. Once these people are pressured down in the lower level, they cannot be meaningful. They have no self-esteem because they feel

basically that they don't have a rightful place, even with their qualifications.

Many, many people who have these qualifications are prepared and ready to serve, as they could. Therefore, I say to the minister that the protection of union seniority rights conflicts with the objectives of employment equity, as it constitutes a barrier to mobility within the organization.

You know, at first when I had seen the legislation, I spoke to the minister and she asked me for my comment on it. I said, "At a glance, it looks like an admirable and positive bill, but upon scrutiny, it's apparent that it guarantees very little to those it should be serving."

1730

What the designated groups need is legislation that, when it is applied, will produce the real change that is so long awaited. It needs teeth in the legislation. When we didn't see it there, you said a regulation would bring that forth. I am concerned that depending only on the regulation is telling us that they are not really serious about employment equity. That is why the legislation is so weak and you left everything to the regulation.

Those are only some of the reasons I couldn't support this employment equity legislation that is proposed by the NDP government.

My colleague Gerry Phillips, when he was the Minister of Citizenship, worked pretty hard to bring about strong legislation. We are committed to employment equity, but we are not at all supportive of weak legislation and poorly drafted regulations. This regulation is cumbersome, unnecessarily bureaucratic and contains too many vague or very ill-defined provisions.

Let us take the example of section 12. It says: "Every employer shall make all reasonable efforts to implement the employer's employment equity plan and to achieve the goals set out in the plan in accordance with time-tables set out in the plan." Let me explain how I understand it. I think it is understood in this manner: You ask an employer to look at itself and take a survey within its group and take the survey that is comparable to the area that has been submitted to the organization, and say, "Make a plan and tell me what you can do." You say, "Well, I can do this in five or six years," or in three years or whatever the case would be.

Then there will be a re-examination if a case comes about in that employer. Then this commissioner will see if they have made some reasonable effort, which of course is not defined. It is not defined what "reasonable effort" would be, unless of course the minister is going to come forward later on and define and put some time frame into that process.

This phrase has little meaning; empty wording which lacks legal meaning. Hence, I strongly believe, unless you can convince me otherwise by amendments to the regulation, that it will mean real change, what is really

needed in this society.

Of course there were a lot of fears in the community, especially among the employers, who felt it is going to be quite onerous; the employers really feared that what is going to come down will be impossible for them to implement. Again, though, the regulation seems to put a tremendous cost on the employer.

The required survey is based on self-identification. I have a little problem with that self-identification. The results of the survey will be obviously skewed, as you know, if an employee refuses to respond to the survey, and they can do that; they can refuse to respond to that survey. While employees are not required to answer the questions, they must return the questionnaire to the employer. If you have a form and it asks you in your workplace to say whether you're a man or a woman, to say whether you're black or white, to say whether you're whatever, disabled or not, and you refuse to answer that but send the questionnaire in, the count then cannot be whether you're francophone, because you did not put it in, so the survey will be rather skewed. You must address that, Madam Minister, to find out how you're going to deal with that.

There are no penalties for non-compliance. I did not see that in the legislation or the regulation. There is definitely an emphasis, as I said, not on people but on paperwork. It lacks that. It lacks the fact that, how are we going to address the concerns of the people?

In regard to the employment equity plan, and I'm looking at part IV, it requires employers to set—and I mentioned it earlier on, and the minister got rather edgy about that—numerical goals for representation of each of the designated groups at every level of the workforce. Well, I could have read the minister wrong; maybe she's comfortable with the fact that there are numerical goals they must have.

The employer is required to look at the composition of the working age population—again, they have to put in the working age of that population—which is in a particular geographic area in order to develop these goals. Again, if that person in your organization did not put their age in there, it could skew the statistics.

We are concerned that it is up to the Employment Equity Commissioner to determine whether or not an employer has made this so-called reasonable progress in fulfilling that goal I spoke about earlier on.

I did mention about the biased way in favour of organized labour. I want you, Madam Minister, to take a very close look at that and see if we're favouring the unions in this respect. I spoke about the seniority rights there. It seems to me, and you can correct me later on, that unions are given approval rights at every step of the process set out in the regulation. When I read it, in the event of a deadlock between an employer and the union, the matter is referred to the commission.

This will prove costly and time-consuming, especially as there are no time frames. I asked you earlier on to keep in mind the individual who's waiting for all of this to be resolved while their job is at stake, their mortgage is at stake, their kids' education is at stake; an employer did not adhere to the legislation, and they're waiting for the commissioner to see if it has made any reasonable progress.

I mentioned, and I want to emphasize it again, that it is public policy of the government to provide all persons in Ontario with equal rights and opportunities to facilitate their full contribution to life in Ontario. I want to spend a little time on this, because this is the part that really troubles me. I am upset, if I dare say, that the long wait of all those designated groups, the long wait they've had to see that they would be addressed appropriately, has now been denied because of weak legislation and very weak regulations. It seems to me that we're more concerned about dealing with the unions and more concerned about paper process, and those individuals who are here, who have been locked out of that process, are then waiting again for that.

1740

I've known people who have come to my constituency office in Scarborough North regularly. Every Friday I go and I know every member in this House has had people come to him or her and speak about the fact that they're being discriminated against in different ways: age, origin of their birth, their profession, where they were trained, and somehow they feel that governments over the years have not addressed that issue.

I applauded the government when it was moving on pay equity, and then when I look closely, they haven't done very much. They have postponed when this will come into place. Again, of course, and I say this very strongly, when this bill was passed in this House, pay equity, where it was addressing equal pay for work of equal value, had lost its definition along the way and only dealt with one designated group: women.

The fact is that now we set up a Pay Equity Commission that is skewed to be gender-specific, and other people who are being denied equal pay for work of equal value are looking forward to this bill, where they will address the inequity and find again you have come short.

So here we have a whole bunch of commissions and equity commissions being set up, and still you're not able to include all. The anti-racism strategy that you set forth: You have met once, I gather, at the round table, and I presume the discussions are going round and round but nothing is being done.

Hon Mr Pouliot: That's an easy cliché. That's not fair.

Mr Curling: The minister stated in the House it had met once, and they wait and they wait.

The disabled community is completely concerned that somehow it has not been addressed there. It has not been consulted one bit about the fact that, as I said, the anti-racism round table strategy or what you call it—

Hon Mr Pouliot: —you people believing all this.

Mr Curling: Those who sit at that table are extremely dedicated people who want some change. But I will tell them, don't put your hopes up in this process. It will not address the concerns because it will be left, just as the access report that has been done and not implemented, just as the Cornish achieving equality report was never looked at by the minister. She has yet to confirm that she has studied it and responded and looked at it in a sense that she will address the concerns here and either say that it's good or bad, or 10% of the recommendations are good, but nothing is done.

Just as the same anti-racism group of people, dedicated, loyal, concerned, committed people, will sit around that table thinking they're going everywhere, anywhere, and just as the round table, the discussion will go round and round.

It's against the law to discriminate. There are so many employment equity officers within the public service and what have you all over the place that what we have done is created more bureaucracy. But I just want you to look within the system and see how much progress has been made. If I am saying I have no faith in that anti-racism committee that you have struck, it is because of experience, experience in the things that you have done and that people have waited so long to have their concerns addressed. So your employment equity legislation here that has waited so long, that you were so ready, it was very, very discouraging to find out it had no teeth in it.

So I have no hope in that. I find, of course, it's a piecemeal approach. The comment, as I said, was chosen with respect to equity issues. The word I would use here is "appalling," and I need not go over why I think it's appalling. I've shown you some of those studies that have not been addressed.

Let me again address to you some of the concerns of my constituents, and I use them as an example because I am confident, I am sure, that you're getting the same type of constituents within your riding, those who are coming before you and saying, "Somehow I don't see that I am progressing in any way." They're losing their home, and when you sit down and talk to them that they have no homes and they're losing their homes and what have you, they get into it and say, "I've been denied to participate in this community."

To deny people to participate is at great cost and a great lost to our society: cost in the effect that of course our welfare costs will go up because the people are denied work, and dehumanizing because the fact is they don't feel their self-worth. "Here is a society to which

I want to contribute, and they won't let me in. They tell me about the systemic discrimination. They tell me that I don't have Canadian experience," or, if they are disabled, that there is no access to the place, or that somehow people take the point of view that they will not intermix properly in that community, and we know that understanding of culture is an important aspect of it.

I just want to address the fact about education versus enforcement, because we all feel that if we educate our society we would solve all our problems. Let me tell you, I never once ever believed that we can wipe out racism. As long as we have human beings and as long as people have power over the other, we will have people who feel that they can be racist to another group because of power itself. But of course we can all work here towards eliminating, as much as possible, racism. So if we educate people, I think that will be reduced considerably. But we must have tough legislation and enforcement to find out the violations of those people who violate the Human Rights Code so that they can be fined heavily, and if, as a matter of fact, some people continue to do this kind of stuff, if they require a licence, their licence can be suspended or the fines be such that they would find it impossible to conduct their illegal act of discrimination.

As I said, I'm not convinced that we're going to wipe it out, but we as legislators have that privilege, that power, the opportunity to make legislation effective, to bring about changes. In the meantime, having legislation without education is a meaningless thing. It's going to be rather costly.

So we must have each in its place, but education must continue. That's why when we try to have human rights carried on, whether as an advocacy or an enforcement commission, whether we have to put the resources there to educate our masses, they can have a better understanding and a better acceptance of people. It runs from the aboriginal people, who are our first nation people, who are even denied their own full participation in our society, to the immigrants who are coming from different parts of the world, who bring a rich culture and professional skills that are so needed in this society.

1750

As we open up our walls and our doors and expand our economic base to Mexico and the United States, to exclude other people is a costly process for us. So while we educate, if we do find those people who are then denying those opportunities, I emphasize that education is not enough. We have to have strong legislation. That is why I feel that your legislation here, being so weak, will do more damage to the process while people bring their hopes up. It comes at a time—we can't talk about it in a recessionary time because we have to be rather careful about how we spend our money.

As a matter of fact, now is the time to do it or the

backlash will be very bad. This is not a threat itself, but the backlash will be very bad. Crime goes up because people are frustrated. There are times when people will undergo an economy that is not even beneficial to the government because it's not reaping its taxes. Families break up because of that.

As we throw our partisan lines across the floor, it's not helpful. As we create legislation and make legislation, we must go beyond the fact of getting away from the rhetoric, "the first in history," "the first province ever." Those things are not important. The importance is that we address the concerns of the people.

As the member for—her riding slips me—mentioned, it's a comfort. They don't need comforts any more; they need legislation. They need practical legislation that in itself will bring about concrete changes that bring people the self-worth they will produce, because people who are not working and people who are denied access cannot contribute to the economy, cannot contribute to their self-worth. We have seen it. We have seen it all over the world where people have been shut out.

I have visited many countries. When I was in Germany, when I was the Minister of Skills Development, looking at their apprenticeship program and finding out how the Turks were working along with the Germans there, one of the biggest problems they were having there was an understanding of the Turkish culture and way of life. What has happened is that we see the results today. They did not take enough time to do that and the backlash is of great cost to the people in Germany or in Berlin today.

We have a country with many immigrants. We say this is a country of immigrants. But we talk about recent immigrants who brought skills here. I regard this country as one of the greatest countries in the world. What can we do? We can destroy it by having poor legislation as we have here. We can destroy it by having people be denied to participate. If we don't seize that opportunity now, we're slipping into a rather terrible condition where you'll be dealing with some of the social issues that are extremely costly.

My children were born here. They are still asked, "Where are you from?" Somehow the education itself—they feel they have to prove themselves more into our society, into their country. As I said, education is important. People carry that further, not asking you where you're from, but denying your right to work. Studies after studies have shown that they have been shut out of the workplace. Studies have shown that employment equity cannot stand on its own. Studies have shown that you cannot address only equity in the workplace, but you have to address equity in aspects of professions and equity in the academic institutions, because of the people in need, and the employer needs to pull from a resource that is qualified.

Quickly, I just want to address some of the backlash

we have seen in the past. Take, for instance, some of the firefighters' areas where they have shown that the only persons who were accepted within that institution in certain areas were white males. Something must be done, because it is peculiar that we feel only white males can fight fire. But that wasn't the problem. The problem was the fact that those who were there were employing their brothers and their uncles. Therefore, we've got to break that down. The fact is that we do have qualified people in other ethnic groups and in another sex, females, who can fight fires just as well as white males. They are qualified too. So these are just symptoms of what is happening.

The last point I want to address, and again, I will address it head on, is the fact that when employment equity was coming in, the sceptics were saying: "I'm a white male. I will be denied jobs in the workplace because it's going to be skewed in order to give them to the designated groups. As a matter of fact, they will not be as qualified as I am."

I want to see a law in place that will treat everyone fairly. Those designated groups are not asking for favours; they're asking to be treated fairly. When you take compromising positions with unions on seniority, you have weakened the law. They're asking, as I said, to be treated fairly, that when a black male or an Indian female or a disabled individual comes for a job, he or she is judged according to his or her ability. Provisions must be made for that access within that workplace. They're not asking for special favours; they're asking that barriers that are systemic in nature, discrimination, be cleared. They are saying the responsibility lies with the government to make that happen, and the government is not doing that. When the government got an opportunity to do that, what it has done is brought about weak legislation, bad regulation, which makes it worse. As I said, in closing, a weak law is worse than no law. I urge my colleagues to address that to begin with.

We are ready to cooperate. I and my party are ready to cooperate to amend that regulation. If you think we don't mean it, say it to me in your response, Madam Minister. Say you're prepared to put the regulation in committee for us to amend it, to make it a better law for you. If you want the praise, you can take it. It doesn't matter. Take the praise that you were the first government in this province to bring about employment equity legislation that is progressive, with the cooperation of this party. I'm sure my colleague in the third party is prepared to have the best employment equity legislation, but as it stands, we cannot support this legislation because it does not go far enough to make sure that all concerns are being addressed.

The Acting Speaker: It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1759.

ERRATUM

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
46	2309	1	6	Pursuant to standing order 94(k), the bill is referred to the committee of the whole House.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor/Lieutenant-gouverneur: Lt Col The Hon/L'hon Henry N.R. Jackman CM, KStJ, BA, LLB, LI

Speaker/Président: Hon/L'hon David Warner

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Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Algoma	Wildman, Hon/L'hon Bud	ND	Minister of Environment and Energy, minister responsible for native affairs / ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Énergie, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A.	L	
Beaches-Woodbine	Lankin, Hon/L'hon Frances	ND	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Brampton North/-Nord	McClelland, Carman	L	
Brampton South/-Sud	Callahan, Robert V.	L	
Brant-Haldimand	Eddy, Ron	L	
Brantford	Ward, Hon/L'hon Brad	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Finance / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Finances
Bruce	Elston, Murray J.	L	
Burlington South/-Sud	Jackson, Cameron	PC	
Cambridge	Farnan, Hon/L'hon Mike	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Education and Training / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation
Carleton	Sterling, Norman W.	PC	
Carleton East/-Est	Morin, Gilles E.	L	Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président et Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Chatham-Kent	Hope, Randy R.	ND	
Cochrane North/-Nord	Wood, Len	ND	
Cochrane South/-Sud	Bisson, Gilles	ND	
Cornwall	Cleary, John C.	L	
Don Mills	Johnson, David	PC	
Dovercourt	Silipo, Hon/L'hon Tony	ND	Minister of Community and Social Services / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Downsview	Perruzza, Anthony	ND	
Dufferin-Peel	Tilson, David	PC	
Durham Centre/-Centre	White, Drummond	ND	
Durham East/-Est	Mills, Gord	ND	
Durham West/-Ouest	Wiseman, Jim	ND	
Durham-York	O'Connor, Larry	ND	
Eglinton	Poole, Dianne	L	
Elgin	North, Peter	ND	
Essex-Kent	Hayes, Pat	ND	
Essex South/-Sud	Vacant	L	
Etobicoke-Humber	Henderson, D. James	L	
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Grier, Hon/L'hon Ruth A.	ND	Minister of Health / ministre de la Santé
Etobicoke-Rexdale	Philip, Hon/L'hon Ed	ND	Minister of Municipal Affairs / ministre des Affaires municipales
Etobicoke West/-Ouest	Stockwell, Chris	PC	
Fort William	McLeod, Lyn	L	Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition
Fort York	Marchese, Rosario	ND	
Frontenac-Addington	Wilson, Hon/L'hon Fred	ND	Minister without Portfolio / ministre sans portefeuille
Grey	Murdoch, Bill	PC	
Guelph	Fletcher, Derek	ND	
Halton Centre/-Centre	Sullivan, Barbara	L	
Halton North/-Nord	Duignan, Noel	ND	
Hamilton Centre/-Centre	Christopherson, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services / solliciteur général et ministre des Services correctionnels
Hamilton East/-Est	Mackenzie, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Hamilton Mountain	Charlton, Hon/L'hon Brian	ND	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, government House leader and minister responsible for the automobile insurance review / président du Conseil de gestion, leader parlementaire du gouvernement et ministre délégué à l'Assurance-automobile
Hamilton West/-Ouest	Allen, Hon/L'hon Richard	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère du Développement économique et du Commerce

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Hastings-Peterborough	Buchanan, Hon/L'hon Elmer	ND	Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for human rights, disability issues, seniors' issues and race relations / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre déléguée aux Droits de la personne, aux Affaires des personnes handicapées, aux Affaires des personnes âgées et aux Relations interraciales
High Park-Swansea	Ziemba, Hon/L'hon Elaine	ND	
Huron	Klopp, Paul	ND	
Kenora	Miclash, Frank	L	Minister of Transportation, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Transports, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones
Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles	Wilson, Gary	ND	
Kitchener	Ferguson, Will	Ind	
Kitchener-Wilmot	Cooper, Mike	ND	Attorney General, minister responsible for women's issues / procureure générale, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Lake Nipigon/Lac-Nipigon	Pouliot, Hon/L'hon Gilles	ND	
Lambton	MacKinnon, Ellen	ND	
Lanark-Renfrew	Jordan, W. Leo	PC	
Lawrence	Cordiano, Joseph	L	
Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W.	PC	
Lincoln	Hansen, Ron	ND	
London Centre/-Centre	Boyd, Hon/L'hon Marion	ND	
London North/-Nord	Cunningham, Dianne	PC	
London South/-Sud	Winning, David	ND	
Markham	Cousens, W. Donald	PC	
Middlesex	Mathysen, Irene	ND	
Mississauga East/-Est	Sola, John	Ind	
Mississauga North/-Nord	Offer, Steven	L	
Mississauga South/-Sud	Marland, Margaret	PC	
Mississauga West/-Ouest	Mahoney, Steven W.	L	
Muskoka-Georgian Bay	Waters, Daniel	ND	
Nepean	Daigeler, Hans	L	
Niagara Falls	Harrington, Margaret H.	ND	
Niagara South/-Sud	Coppen, Hon/L'hon Shirley	ND	
Nickel Belt	Laughren, Hon/L'hon Floyd	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation; chief government whip / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs ; whip en chef du gouvernement
Nipissing	Harris, Michael	PC	Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances
Norfolk	Jamison, Norm	ND	
Northumberland	Fawcett, Joan M.	L	
Oakville South/-Sud	Carr, Gary	PC	
Oakwood	Rizzo, Tony	ND	
Oriole	Caplan, Elinor	L	
Oshawa	Pilkey, Hon/L'hon Allan	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Municipal Affairs / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Affaires municipales
Ottawa Centre/-Centre	Gigantes, Hon/L'hon Evelyn	ND	Minister of Housing / ministre du Logement
Ottawa East/-Est	Grandmaître, Bernard C.	L	
Ottawa-Rideau	O'Neill, Yvonne	L	
Ottawa South/-Sud	McGuinty, Dalton J.P.	L	
Ottawa West/-Ouest	Chiarelli, Robert	L	
Oxford	Sutherland, Kimble	ND	
Parkdale	Ruprecht, Tony	L	
Parry Sound	Eves, Ernie	PC	
Perth	Haslam, Karen	ND	
Peterborough	Carter, Jenny	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Health / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Santé
Port Arthur	Wark-Martyn, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	
Prescott and Russell / Prescott et Russell	Poirier, Jean	L	
Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings/Prince Edward- Lennox-Hastings-Sud	Johnson, Paul R.	ND	
Quinte	O'Neil, Hugh P.	L	
Rainy River	Hampton, Hon/L'hon Howard	ND	
Renfrew North/-Nord	Conway, Sean G.	L	Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Riverdale	Churley, Hon/L'hon Marilyn	ND	Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
S-D-G & East Grenville / S-D-G et Grenville-Est	Villeneuve, Noble	PC	
St Andrew-St Patrick	Akande, Zanana	ND	Speaker / Président
St Catharines	Bradley, James J.	L	
St Catharines-Brock	Haeck, Christel	ND	
St George-St David	Murphy, Tim	L	
Sarnia	Huget, Bob	ND	
Sault Ste Marie / Sault-Sainte-Marie	Martin, Tony	ND	
Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry	L	
Scarborough Centre/-Centre	Owens, Stephen	ND	
Scarborough East/-Est	Frankford, Robert	ND	
Scarborough-Ellesmere	Warner, Hon/L'hon David	ND	
Scarborough North/-Nord	Curling, Alvin	L	Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation / ministre de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs
Scarborough West/-Ouest	Swarbrick, Hon/L'hon Anne	ND	
Simcoe Centre/-Centre	Wessenger, Paul	ND	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Simcoe East/-Est	McLean, Allan K.	PC	
Simcoe West/-Ouest	Wilson, Jim	PC	
Sudbury	Murdock, Sharon	ND	
Sudbury East/-Est	Martel, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	
Timiskaming	Ramsay, David	L	
Victoria-Haliburton	Drainville, Dennis	Ind	
Waterloo North/-Nord	Witmer, Elizabeth	PC	
Welland-Thorold	Kormos, Peter	ND	
Wellington	Arnott, Ted	PC	
Wentworth East/-Est	Morrow, Mark	ND	Minister of Education and Training, minister responsible for the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / ministre de l'Éducation et de la Formation, ministre responsable du Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main- d'oeuvre
Wentworth North/-Nord	Abel, Donald	ND	
Willowdale	Harnick, Charles	PC	
Wilson Heights	Kwinter, Monte	L	
Windsor-Riverside	Cooke, Hon/L'hon David	ND	
Windsor-Sandwich	Dadamo, George	ND	
Windsor-Walkerville	Lessard, Wayne	ND	
York Centre/-Centre	Sorbara, Gregory S.	L	
York East/-Est	Malkowski, Gary	ND	
York Mills	Turnbull, David	PC	
York North/-Nord	Beer, Charles	L	Premier, President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre, président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires gouvernementales
York South/-Sud	Rae, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	
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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 13 July 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 13 juillet 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Tuesday 13 July 1993

The House met at 1332.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TOURISM MINISTRY

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): A short while back, the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation announced that she had set up a committee to develop a tourism sector strategy for the province of Ontario. Although we as an opposition are very pleased to see that this has finally happened, may I remind her and the government that this was suggested over 18 months ago, that something was going to happen, and it never did.

I should also remind the government that the tourism industry, people from Tourism Ontario, met at that time with the Premier, in January of this year, and suggested many changes and things that they thought should be done to help the tourism industry, but as we are very well aware, none of these things happened, and in fact many of the things that happened in the budget were very detrimental to the tourism industry in the province of Ontario.

These people who will be forming part of this tourism sector are very high-profile people within the province and within the tourism industry and will be making, as I understand, some very excellent recommendations to this government on the things that should be done to help the tourism industry.

But I might also remind the minister that these people from the tourism industry are not going to be used. They will be coming forward with some very important recommendations that the government should act on right away. If the minister and the government do not act on them, the tourism industry will be even more badly affected than it already is. I would suggest that they look at these suggestions very carefully.

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): The NDP government has decided to ban the use of chlorine or AOX in pulp and paper mills by the year 2002. This decision is an irrational response to pressure from environmental groups that is not based on scientific evidence or fact. There is a high degree of evidence that contradicts the studies used by this government, as did evidence by Environment Canada. As stated by the Financial Post, "The precedent for imposing regulations in the face of contrary scientific opinion is an ominous one."

In order to illustrate this ominous effect, I ask the ministers of Environment and Energy and of Natural Resources to consider the James River pulp and paper mill in Marathon. Over the past several years, they have spent \$20 million to create one of the first elemental

chlorine-free mills on the continent. Under this government's proposed regulation, they will need \$130 million in no-return capital to comply with these restrictions. As stated by the chief executive officer of this Virginia-based company, this program will dash any hope for the mill's future.

Here is an example of 350 pulp and paper jobs that will be lost due to irresponsible regulatory policies. In fact, over 6,000 jobs will die from Dryden to Espanola as a result of this pernicious act.

LEONARD CONOLLY

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): As of January 1, 1994, Trent University in Peterborough will have Mr Leonard Conolly as its president. Len is presently the acting vice-president, academic, at the University of Guelph. Before this, he was the associate vice-president, academic.

Len is originally from Walsall, England. He received his BA from the University of Wales and his MA from McMaster University in Ontario. He received his PhD from the University of Wales in England.

He and his family—his wife, Barbara, and two children, James and Rebecca—reside in Guelph. Len is not only a progressive, moving force at the University of Guelph, he's very active in our community.

Len moved to Guelph in 1981 and was a member of the board for the Guelph Spring Festival. This year he was the president of the Guelph Spring Festival board, and an exciting year it was. Mr Conolly is also a member of the organizing committee of the Guelph civic centre. I know Len hasn't moved to Peterborough yet.

I would tell the member for Peterborough, if she was sitting here, that Trent University is not only getting a top-notch individual as president, but Peterborough also is receiving a very fine citizen who will not only contribute much to the university, but also to the community of Peterborough. Guelph's loss is Peterborough's gain.

Let me wish all the best and my sincere congratulations to Len Conolly and his family and also best wishes for the future.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I'd like to bring to the attention of the Legislature today the growing crisis in health care in Ontario. This is happening all over the province but it's very apparent in northern Ontario.

I, with my northern colleagues Frank Miclash from Kenora and Mike Brown from Algoma-Manitoulin, travelled northeastern Ontario last week. It was very apparent that in towns and city after city there's a

growing crisis in health care in the north, besides the whole province.

In Sudbury, for instance, there's a severe shortage of orthopaedic surgeons. Of course, this surgery now has to be done in other centres and it means the transportation of our patients and it's very costly to the health care system.

I don't have to look very far from home. Right in the riding of Timiskaming, the great town of Kirkland Lake on the north end of Timiskaming is now short of anaesthetists. This means that elective surgery has to be postponed. In fact, by September only 40% of elective surgery will be able to go ahead if nothing is done, so the town is looking for some sort of emergency funding in order to fund anaesthetists to carry on elective surgery in Kirkland Lake.

The town of Englehart, just down from Kirkland Lake on Highway 11, is in a severe, critical situation where by August now we will only have one doctor. If anything should happen there, of course, that means that hospital would not be able to operate.

It's time that the government brought some clear policies so that our new doctors, who primarily are candidates for underserved areas, understand what the rules are. Is it 25%, 75% or 100% for our doctors? We'd like to know.

1340

HEALTH CARE

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): This Friday and Saturday, doctors in Wellington county, out of total frustration with this government's mismanagement of health care services, will be hosting Operation Barefoot.

Doctors in Wellington will be walking in one-mile intervals in bare feet all the way from Arthur to Guelph to protest this government's health care policies. The walk is a unique and innovative method of drawing the government's attention to the importance of maintaining the availability and delivery of health care services in rural Ontario, a protest which does not affect patient care.

Wellington county is served by three hospitals: Groves Memorial Community Hospital in Fergus, Louise Marshall Hospital in Mount Forest, and Palmerston and District Hospital. Each one of these hospitals provides vital health care services to the communities it serves.

Health care is one of the most important issues in Wellington. People in Wellington county depend on Groves Memorial, Louise Marshall and Palmerston hospitals for chronic care beds, obstetrical services and emergency care. In rural areas, where people often have to travel great distances for goods and services, basic health care services such as these are very important.

The government, through bureaucratic means, is rationing health care in this province. Many services are

currently under review. In rural areas like Wellington, further erosion of health care will have devastating consequences. It is time that this government heeds the message which Wellington doctors will be sending via their symbolic walk.

EPILEPSY SUDBURY-MANITOULIN ASSOCIATION

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): As you know, there are many associations in all our ridings that do good work in usually volunteer capacities. All of them, of course, are fund-raising, and I want to talk about one that's an especially hard worker in my riding, the Epilepsy Sudbury-Manitoulin Association which, under the expert guidance of Lorraine Lavigueur this Sunday, July 18, from 11 o'clock in the morning till 4 o'clock in the afternoon, is having a family day out at the Anderson farm in Lively.

It's a day for not only the family, but also all funds and proceeds are going to be going to the epilepsy association for Sudbury and Manitoulin. Lionel Duquanne, Jim Fortin and Lise Martel all have put in numerous hours of work trying to make sure that this is going to be a success.

I would like to invite everyone to attend, and if you're on holidays up in north country, you will enjoy not only the blueberry festival but you can enjoy blueberry muffins at the epilepsy picnic. There will be the all-day children's movies, line dancing, which I'm sure all of us could get into, a dunk booth, live music—I've been invited to sing; that alone should be worth coming up—pony rides and much more.

I hope that everyone will attend. Anderson farm is in the Treasurer's riding and I'm sure I expect to see him there too.

EMANCIPATION CELEBRATIONS

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): This past weekend marked the 200th anniversary of the first anti-slavery legislation in Canada. On July 9, 1793, it became illegal to bring slaves into Upper Canada. This was the first step towards the complete abolition of slavery.

This anti-slavery legislation was largely the result of one man's moral outrage at the existence of slavery, John Graves Simcoe, Upper Canada's first Lieutenant Governor, and led to the establishment of the famous Underground Railroad, which became the road to freedom for thousands of slaves fleeing bondage in the United States.

This anti-slavery law was the first anywhere in the English-speaking world. It was passed nearly 40 years before the British Emancipation Act, which abolished slavery throughout the British Empire, and 60 years before similar legislation in the United States.

On Saturday, I joined in one of the many events commemorating this proud achievement at the British Methodist Episcopal Church in St Catharines, where a

plaque commemorating Harriet Ross Tubman was unveiled.

Lord Simcoe's anti-slavery law set the tone for the proud Canadian tradition of belief in equality and freedom, and of respect and tolerance for the richness in diversity that has become the hallmark of our society and for which we are respected worldwide.

Yet while Lord Simcoe's law marked the beginning of the end of a sad chapter in our history, it did not put an end to all racism and discrimination.

So, as we celebrate the passage of this landmark legislation, we are reminded that we must all continue our efforts to ensure that all Ontarians and indeed all Canadians from all walks of life can live lives of dignity free from discrimination and free from hate.

ONTARIO STUDENTS AGAINST IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): The elimination of drinking and driving is one of the most important challenges facing our society, since each year many people die in tragic automobile accidents caused by impaired drivers.

I would like to congratulate the young people, teachers, health professionals and police who are part of the Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving organization. Over 75% of the high schools in this province are members of this organization, which provides programming and promotional campaigns through which young people are sending their peers and their community the message: Drive sober.

This organization is urging the provincial government to take immediate action on the following measures which will contribute significantly to the reduction of impaired driving: mandatory server intervention training for all personnel who serve alcoholic beverages; mandatory licence suspension for 90 days based on the model presently used in Manitoba; comprehensive assessment and treatment programs for all repeat offenders; ignition interlock systems based on the model presently used in Manitoba; and expansion of the RIDE program, as it believes this is the strongest deterrent to the impaired driver.

I join Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving in calling on the government to implement these measures as quickly as possible.

BROOKLIN VILLAGE VOICE AND COUNTRY RAMBLER

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): There's hardly a day goes by in this House that we don't hear in one way or another from members of the opposition that the province has gone to the dogs.

If you listened to the leader of the third party—who isn't here today—for more than a few minutes, you would surely believe that business has fled the province and there isn't anyone left with a desire to start a

business in Ontario.

How wrong he is. Today I want to salute a brand-new enterprise in my riding of Durham East. The new business is a newspaper located in Brooklin, and the weekly is rightly named the Brooklin Village Voice and Country Rambler.

This weekly newspaper serves over 10,000 readers with its mix of local news, sports, community events and comments.

I am pleased to welcome the Brooklin Village Voice and Country Rambler to my riding of Durham East, and I wish every success to the publisher, Mr Barry Conway, and to his staff. Long may you serve the community of Brooklin and long may you serve the riding of Durham East.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

ENERGY CONSERVATION ÉCONOMIE D'ÉNERGIE

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): I'm pleased to be able to report to the House on the first stage of a pilot project to conserve energy in non-profit and public housing and to announce the beginning of the second phase of the project.

L'an dernier, boulot Ontario Construction a engagé plus de 28 millions de dollars dans un projet pilote destiné à économiser l'énergie, à créer des emplois et à mettre à l'épreuve une nouvelle technologie.

Le projet est un effort conjoint du ministère du Logement et du ministère de l'Environnement et de l'Énergie. Jusqu'à maintenant, plus de 12 000 logements sociaux ont profité du programme et plus de 260 emplois ont été créés.

And we've learned a lot in the process.

When we started the program last November, our main target was to convert as many social housing units as possible from electric heating to heating with natural gas or other fuels.

On that basis, we'd calculated that we could convert about 7,000 units of non-profit and public housing, but we found that by broadening our energy conservation strategy to include measures such as more efficient shower heads and better building insulation, we could substantially increase both the number of units covered and the scope of the technology involved.

1350

Instead of the 7,000 units we had initially contemplated, we'll now be able to improve energy efficiency in about 23,000 social housing units, and we expect to create more than 1,100 jobs before the demonstration project is completed.

As we're creating these jobs, we're also developing and testing new technology. We're breaking new ground in the fuel substitution field and we're working closely

with the private sector so that the lessons we learn today can be used more widely in the future.

In the first phase of the project, we concentrated on fuel substitution in low-rise buildings, where there's some experience with the technology we'd be using. For the second phase we'll be doing more work in high-rise buildings, where the technology is least known. In fact, when we were developing the program, we found that internationally there was very little information on retrofitting in high-rise buildings. Ontario is really going to be breaking new ground here.

We're also working with a range of alternative energy sources such as passive solar heating.

The buildings that have already benefited from this program haven't been through one of our Canadian winters yet, so we don't know how much money we'll end up saving. But we do know that in an average row house, converting from electric to gas heating can mean savings of up to \$600 per year; that's \$50 a month.

Building partnerships with the private sector was also a goal in this initiative. Final tallies aren't yet in but, on a cautious estimate, about 8% of the costs are being contributed by private sector partners. We're now working with energy supply companies and gas utilities to promote new funding partnerships.

Last week I had the pleasure of visiting four communities to announce the beginning of the second phase of this program. Another 3,300 social housing units will participate in the program and another 300 jobs will be created. I'll be announcing the rest of the second phase in August.

I'm excited about the potential of this program and I'm proud of the progress we have made so far. It's a program that means cost savings for the taxpayer, the development of a made-in-Ontario technology with great export and job creation potential, and a significant contribution to our conservation and environmental goals.

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I would like to respond to the announcement by the Minister of Housing today. On the surface, of course this announcement looks very good. Is there anybody in this Legislature who is not going to support having energy conservation and using energy sources wisely? It makes economic sense, it makes conservation sense, it makes social sense, it makes environmental sense, so we certainly do support that. We also support the fact, as we did when the minister made this original announcement for the first phase in November of last year, that it does create jobs.

But I'd like to look at a few things in this announcement that are, as our old friend Sam Cureatz used to say, passing strange.

The first thing is that the minister says, "Instead of the 7,000 units we initially contemplated, we'll now be

able to improve energy efficiency in about 23,000 social housing units." I think we all have to admit that's a little strange: that the government originally estimated that with the same amount of money, it could have conversion in 7,000 units and that now it's been tripled with the same amount of money.

Doesn't this lead you to believe a number of things? The first is that the planning that went into the original announcement was not very thorough. They didn't know what they were going to save. They didn't know what they were going to spend. They did not know how much labour they were going to use. They had no reliable estimates of what this program was going to cost, so they threw it out.

Now they find, after they've been in the first phase of the pilot project for eight months: "Oh no, we made a mistake. It wasn't 7,000 units we could have energy conservation in; it's actually 23,000. That's right."

One of the other strange things is that the minister says, "And we expect to create more than 1,100 jobs before the demonstration project is completed." I go back to the press release and the announcement of November 16, 1992. How many jobs were they going to create? The same number: 1,100.

So we've tripled the amount of work that's going to be done, but it's going to create the same number of jobs.

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): That is passing strange.

Ms Poole: As Sam used to say, it's passing strange.

If we go on further in the minister's announcement, she makes a couple of statements. "We're breaking new ground in the fuel substitution field and we're working closely with the private sector so the lessons we learn today can be used more widely in the future."

Then she goes on to say:

"For the second phase, we'll be doing more work in high-rise buildings, where the technology is least known. In fact, when we were developing the program we found that internationally there was very little information on retrofitting in high-rise buildings. Ontario is really going to be breaking new ground here."

That's a bunch of garbage. There is all sorts of information available here in Ontario. If the minister had gone to the Ontario Home Builders' Association, if she'd gone to the Metropolitan Toronto Apartment Builders Association, if she'd gone to the Fair Rental Policy Organization of Ontario, if she had gone to co-op buildings, there are any number of sources where they have expert information available on what it costs to retrofit high-rises and on energy retrofitting.

But what really galls me about this is that this minister has the nerve to say she's forging a partnership with the private sector. I sat through those Bill 4

hearings and I sat through those Bill 121 hearings, and there was no partnership forged with the private sector. In her own legislation, Bill 121, which I voted against on third reading, this minister had the nerve to put in disincentives to the private sector for energy conservation. Not only did they not provide incentives, they actually provided disincentives.

Hon Ms Gigantes: That is not the case.

Ms Poole: That is absolutely the case, Madam Minister. It was brought to this minister's attention at the time and she ignored it. She said, "No, no, the apartment building owners will go ahead and they will do this work in energy conservation and energy retrofitting." Even though the tenants are able to apply for a rebate for the entire amount back, they will do it in spite of what this minister said. The fact is, Minister, they didn't do it and they won't do it.

I raised the issue of the Caterpillar and the joint Japanese venture last fall. They were going to go ahead with energy retrofitting of our apartment buildings and they were going to use capital losses through the Income Tax Act because the feds changed the rules. This minister put the kibosh on that with her legislation in Bill 121. That's what they told us. We lost those jobs. So don't think you can placate us with these announcements and these reannouncements, Minister.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): In rising to respond to this statement by the Minister of Housing, of anything we've heard in the last two weeks this really confirms the fact that these sittings are an absolute waste of time. This government is so hard up for something to say and something to announce that it's reached all the way back not only to November of last year when this same minister made this announcement, but in fact to the spring when Mr Cooke made the same announcement. It's kind of interesting. We're now getting an announcement made three times by two different people. It's unfortunate that the government can't be a little more imaginative and come up with some programs that it not only announces but intends to do something about.

In this particular case, when I look back at the Hansard from last year and see the numbers the minister announced, it becomes even more intriguing when we look at the announcement today, because instead of 7,000, as has already been said, she's now saying 23,000. It's really announced under this wonderful global pot called Jobs Ontario. If some of us had nothing else to do, we could really enjoy checking back through Hansard about how many times Jobs Ontario Capital has been announced and reannounced and yet not executed. That really concerns us.

One of the things that really concerns me this afternoon about this particular announcement is that if hydro is too expensive for residential use, what does that say for business and industry in this province? Frankly, I

think it's an irony that this same minister would not accept my PC amendments to Bill 121 that would permit private landlords in this province the same option of retrofitting and then recovering their legitimate costs of retrofitting their buildings.

1400

But no, as always, there's a double standard here. It doesn't matter whether you're talking about child care or care of the elderly, whatever it is that this government is involved in, it thinks it's fine to look after the public sector and ignore the private sector. I wonder where they think the taxes come from for them to have money to spend at all in the first place. They all come from the private sector. The public sector does not put any money in the treasury in this province, and the fact that we do have one set of rules for the public and one for the private really is unacceptable to us.

The best part of this announcement today of course is that, "We're also working with a range of alternative energy sources such as passive solar heating." I simply have to say to this minister, why? It's so incredible that she would be considering passive solar heating when that has been investigated to death and we know how it's just simply not an alternative at this time in terms of the kind of storage batteries that are available for solar generation.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): It is too bad the Minister of Energy isn't here. Timing's everything.

Yesterday Ontario Hydro announces it has got a \$1.6-billion deficit. We come into the House today and we hear an announcement by this government about the conversion off of Ontario Hydro, thereby increasing the deficit that Ontario Hydro will face.

This particular government is saving nothing. They're saving nothing. The fact is this: Every buck they save by not using Ontario Hydro with the deficit simply gets passed back to the taxpayer, because they're going to run a deficit on Ontario Hydro this year after they told us they were running a surplus. I mean, it's clearly a case of the left hand not knowing what the other left hand is doing. We have a government that will announce today, or yesterday, that their pure surplus they called for last year is now gone. Energy demand is now down. The energy operation, Ontario Hydro, is reeling. We're talking in the neighbourhood of \$1.6 billion in losses.

If this conversion takes place, you do away with your customer base, your customers who were paying their bills to keep Ontario Hydro afloat. Now they're driving them out of business, they're working against themselves and then claiming this is a panacea because we're actually going to save the taxpayers money. You're saving them nothing. You're reducing that intake at this level, driving up the deficit of Ontario Hydro, and you underwrite it.

The decision-making over there, it's pretty obvious, is very, very poor.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My first question is for the Minister of Health. Minister, the members of our caucus, and I am sure the members of your caucus, are hearing more and more concerns about access to medical services in this province, and people are concerned that it is going to get even worse.

We're hearing about specialists who are leaving the province, in fact leaving the country. We're hearing about communities that can't secure the services of family physicians. In Leamington, they need to replace a doctor. They can't find a family physician who will come. In Englehart, they need family doctors. They can't find any who will come to their town. In Kirkland Lake, they need an anaesthetist. They apparently have two physicians who are prepared to provide services, but the Ministry of Health will not approve their proposal under the underserviced plan. In Chelsea, they need a family doctor. They found a graduating physician who will come, but the Ministry of Health will not issue this young doctor a billing number.

Every member of this House is hearing similar kinds of problems, and I believe, Minister, that you and your colleagues yourselves have raised these issues over the years and that even since becoming Minister of Health you've identified the gaps in service and the fact that some towns and communities are not yet adequately served as being a serious problem.

Minister, I ask you today, why do you think that these communities are having difficulty in finding physicians who can provide the needed medical services, and can you tell us in what way Bill 50, which is the centrepiece of your new health policy and your plan, is going to solve this particular problem?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Let me say that I appreciate the question, and I know that the Leader of the Opposition and members of her caucus have wrestled with this issue too—it is a long-standing one—of how do we ensure that we have the appropriate health professionals in the places where they're needed and how do we begin to manage the health resources of the province in a way that ensures that needs are met and that the particular needs of particular communities are addressed?

Let me say to the Leader of the Opposition that I don't see Bill 50 as being the only way of doing that. It is an element of the work of this government in trying to address cost and trying to get some tools to better manage the system. But what I hope we can manage and what I am firmly committed to developing, in conjunction with the profession, with the academic health science centres and with the district health

councils, is a better way of identifying the needs of the kinds of communities the member has noted and a long-term solution by better planning and better management of our health resources.

Mrs McLeod: I'll tell you today there is no sense out there that this is what you're involved in. This is an entirely different problem than this province has ever faced before. There is a tremendous sense that we have a growing crisis in our health care system in this province, and I would say to you, Minister, that it is no longer just the underserviced areas that are a concern and this is no longer just a distribution problem.

Access to doctors, to health care is becoming a concern right across this province in every community. I would say to you again today that Bill 50 is not part of the solution, Bill 50 is very much part of the problem. Your unilateral attempts to run this health care system are already driving physicians out of this province, and I would say too that the problem began with your ad hoc and your unilateral proposals to cut funding for the services that are provided by new physicians to 75%.

It is now July. Medical students have finished their training. These young physicians want to stay in the province. They want to meet the needs in Leamington, Englehart, Chelsea and Kirkland Lake, and they still don't know what the status of your proposal is.

Will you confirm today whether new doctors are indeed going to have their fees reduced and to what level, will you tell us whether or not you are going to be denying billing numbers to new physicians and will you tell us how these policies are going to help the people of Leamington, Chelsea, Kirkland Lake and Englehart recruit the physicians they need?

Hon Mrs Grier: The Leader of the Opposition knows full well that discussions, negotiations are ongoing at a number of tables with not only the OMA but other health care providers and that we are discussing still the potential for the OMA being part of the social contract. We are discussing with the OMA under their framework agreement fee schedules and with the joint management committee how we can better manage resources. At some point some discussions are going on; at some point other discussions are going on.

Let me caution the Leader of the Opposition that in the climate of difficult negotiations and in a climate of attempts by the government to better manage resources—and let me remind her that over a period of 15 years the population of this province grew by 19% and the number of physicians in the province grew by 47%, so it is the distribution that is the underlying problem that needs to be addressed and the problem that has to be addressed by some fundamental changes in the way we manage those resources for the long term, and that the short-term difficulties, debates and negotiations colour our attempts to find solutions to that, as always

happens when negotiations are ongoing.

But I would again caution the Leader of the Opposition that what has to happen is a long-term solution. That doesn't mean we can ignore the short-term issues, but those short-term issues are no different today than they were last summer or the summer before.

Mrs McLeod: I would say to the minister that those words do not reflect in any way what is actually happening to health care in this province right now. The health care system of this province is in a state of crisis because of the policies of this minister, and the minister will not answer even the most basic questions about how her policies are going to be put in place and what the impacts of her policies are going to be.

The minister has talked about the importance of long-range planning, the importance of working in partnership with health care providers. In fact there are not meaningful negotiations or meaningful discussions taking place.

The Ontario Hospital Association today has said that the social contract negotiations are at an impasse, and we know that hospitals are left with no sense of how they're going to be able to provide the services that are needed. We know that Bill 29 is proposing to implement unilateral cuts to drug benefits and implementing user fees for seniors' drugs. We know that Bill 50 and your fee regime for new physicians are driving physicians out of this province, and you will not even explain what kind of health care system we are likely to have left after all of these initiatives are put in place.

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When will this minister realize that there is no one to blame but herself and her government for the confusion and the confrontation which are threatening our health care system? I use those words advisedly. When will this Minister of Health stop trying to dictate personally how health care service is going to be provided in this province and in fact sit down and work in partnership with the people in the health care field to make sure that needed health care services are provided in every community across the province of Ontario?

Hon Mrs Grier: Let me express to the Leader of the Opposition my distress at her overriding exaggeration of problems in the health care system. We have one of the finest health care systems in the world and certainly in this country. We have a health care system that has for at least the last decade been very much in need of reform. That need for reform was identified to her government, whether it be mental health reform, long-term care reform, hospital reform or—dare I say it?—reform of the way in which physicians are distributed, paid, and part of the system. The health care system is far broader than the issues that relate directly to physicians.

In her questions today, the member has been focusing

on physicians but talking more broadly. I acknowledge that we are having difficult discussions with the Ontario Medical Association as we attempt to find ways to constrain our costs and to manage our health human resources in a better way. But let me not for a moment allow the Leader of the Opposition to confuse that particular problem with the most enormous strides that have been made by hospitals in providing a better quality of care, reducing the level of increase or even reducing their operating costs; at the work that district health councils are doing; at the work in long-term care reform and our mental health reform policy. We are in fact for the first time managing and reforming the system in a way that meets the needs of the people of this province.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My second question is to the Minister of Finance, who has also suggested that we are exaggerating the concerns that we hear out in the communities of this province.

As you're aware, we've earlier raised our concerns about the effect that increased stumpage fees would have on independent logging companies, on small sawmills and ultimately on the whole forest industry. We've said that the increased stumpage fees that you brought in in your budget would lead to companies closing down right across northern Ontario.

I was told by you, in response to one of my questions, Minister, that nothing could be further from the truth. In fact I met on Friday with a group of these small independent business people, and some have already shut down. The rest cannot survive more than a couple of weeks. My colleagues are hearing exactly the same thing in their communities from Kapuskasing to Hearst.

I ask the Finance minister: How many independent logging companies have already ceased operations? How many people have been laid off? How many more of these businesses are going to close? How many more people are going to be out of work because of this revenue grab?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): It takes a lot of nerve for a Liberal to accuse anybody of a tax grab. However, the ridiculous preamble aside, there is contained within the question a serious problem. That has to do with the increase in stumpage fees in the province. When the stumpage fee was increased, I acknowledge that prices of lumber were higher than they are now. Since that time, prices have declined.

The Minister of Natural Resources, which would not surprise the member opposite, I'm sure, has had several conversations with me concerning the stumpage fees. He is, almost as we speak—well, not today—talking with the industry about the problem and if there is some way to alleviate it.

Mrs McLeod: It would be very encouraging to hear that the Finance minister was prepared to reverse it since it was his budget, or that the Minister of Natural Resources is giving a different response to these people than the response which he has given publicly to date, which is basically to tell them that they're going to have to solve the problem themselves and that indeed they may be whiners.

I would suggest to the minister that I don't consider it to be a ridiculous preamble when I ask him if he knows how many businesses, in the last week even, have shut their doors because of his budget increase.

When I used figures, prior to the closures actually occurring, to try to suggest the dimensions of the problem, I may in fact have used figures that were the exception. The minister may recall that I suggested people were tending to get \$8 profit on a cord of wood and that they were now paying something in the order of \$8 to \$12 more in stumpage fees. I was told on Friday that it's much more typical for people to be getting \$2 profit on a cord of wood and that they're now paying \$10 more in fees.

The minister is right when he suggests that things have changed and that these people cannot solve their problem by raising their prices. In fact, they signed contracts on April 1, before the minister brought in his budget, to deliver wood at the going rate. It's been suggested they might defer the fees. They say they will never make enough money to pay the back fees that are owed.

Minister, it is ironical that you are not going to see the increase from your fees either, because you can't get revenue from somebody who's out of business. One operator alone who's already closed his doors showed me that he paid \$1 million in taxes last year. With one closure, that's \$1 million gone from the \$130 million that you hope to gain with this revenue increase.

I ask you, Minister, have you made any calculation at all of how much tax revenue you're going to lose as a result of this particular and misguided revenue grab? How much revenue are you now receiving from companies that are closing their doors? What is that going to do to the bottom line of your 1993-94 budget?

Hon Mr Laughren: I just want to clear the air on the matter of my accusation that she had a ridiculous preamble. It had nothing to do with the number of jobs lost or the number of closures; it was the ridiculous accusation that anybody but a Liberal could engage in an outrageous tax grab. That was what was ridiculous about the preamble. Now she has once again referred to a revenue grab, which hardly does justice to the seriousness of the issue.

I agree with the leader of the official opposition that there is a problem here. I acknowledge that, but I'm not sure what engaging in excessive rhetoric is going to do

to resolve the problem. The Minister of Natural Resources is meeting with us on a regular basis to see if we can resolve it, because as I said in my initial answer, I agree that there is a problem and we are working at it.

Mrs McLeod: I can only hope, again, that the response these people get very quickly is a different response than they have had from this government, and particularly from this minister and the Minister of Natural Resources, over the last few days. It has become only too apparent that the government is concerned far more about making a show of restraint than about actually making good economic decisions. This was not a good economic decision.

What I can understand even less is that throughout these last weeks as these people have raised their concerns and as we have brought these concerns into the House, even if you don't care about the economic basis of your decision, no one seems to care about the human cost. There are 455 people directly employed by these independent operators solely in the Fort Frances and Kenora area. There are another 450 people employed in the bush and the mill in the Atikokan area. There are literally thousands more who are affected across northern Ontario. These people who are today being laid off are going to be on social assistance because there is simply nothing else for them.

I have a set of petitions which tell the government how people are feeling about this issue. The independent loggers have formed an association. They've done surveys of people who will be indirectly affected, and they tell you how people feel about this.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the leader place her question, please.

Mrs McLeod: I would like the Treasurer to talk to people who are about to auction off their equipment, which means that their businesses will be completely closed because they have to pay their bank loans.

Mr Speaker, I just want to take one moment to read to the minister—I will place my question—a letter from people representing the Atikokan Loggers Association, who say in response to their meeting with the Minister of Natural Resources:

"We want you to know how utterly disappointed we are at your lack of concern, compassion and support. You and your government obviously do not realize the full impact this will have on everyone, especially your own constituency."

The Speaker: Would the leader place a question, please.

Mrs McLeod: I ask, given this concern expressed by people in these communities in this industry, how can the Minister of Natural Resources say simply that they will just have to work something out? How can that be considered even a half-hearted response to these con-

cerns? Minister, why don't you open your ears and eyes and find out what is happening before it is too late? This is a crisis for northern Ontario and nobody really seems to care in your government.

Hon Mr Laughren: Like the leader of the official opposition, I'm from northern Ontario as well and I have lumber operators and pulp and paper operators in my own constituency, so I think that to engage in her partisan rhetoric about nobody caring simply doesn't serve her purpose well either, not even her political purposes. It is a serious problem. I indicated that and I indicated that the Minister of Natural Resources is trying to work it out between us and the industry to see if there is a solution. We do take it seriously and we are trying to do something about it.

In conclusion, I would say once again that I acknowledge it's a serious problem. What I find really weird, though, is for the leader of the official opposition to say this government is more interested in a show of restraint rather than good economics. I understand why she would not know the difference between a show of restraint and real restraint, given her record of five years in office.

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TEMPORARY ABSENCE PROGRAM

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): My question is for the Minister of Correctional Services. Two years ago, I advised your predecessor about the release of a convicted rapist on a provincial temporary absence program just two months after he began serving his two-year sentence. The day after I raised it in the Legislature, he was hauled back into custody.

Last week, the standing committee on government agencies recommended a full review of the temporary absence program. Will you commit to that review?

Hon David Christopherson (Minister of Correctional Services): We've received the report. It's my intention to review that report, the recommendations, and respond promptly.

Mr Runciman: That sounds like something less than a commitment. When this rapist was released under the temporary absence program, the 12-year-old victim's mother met him on the street, a traumatic experience for the mother, but it could just as easily have been the 12-year-old girl who met him on the street.

The standing committee also recommended that your ministry introduce a policy of informing victims when offenders are released into the community on temporary absence passes, especially in cases of sexual assault. Will you commit today to introducing that policy?

Hon Mr Christopherson: Again, with great respect to the honourable member and the work of the committee, we certainly take all of their recommendations very seriously. We've just received the report. I think it would be a little bit presumptuous for me to be standing

here saying exactly what our position would be until we've had a chance to review those things, except to say to the honourable member that in the criminal justice system in the areas of charging and in corrections, all throughout the system, the emphasis is more and more on violent acts and those that have the potential for violent acts and to deal with less violent offenders in a more efficient, effective manner, thereby giving us a more effective corrections system. I would add that is also the direction of our federal counterparts in Ottawa.

Mr Runciman: In essence, that's another non-answer. We're talking about a situation—he says he was just made aware of this. I raised an issue of a rapist on the streets two years ago in Brockville with your predecessor and the individual was yanked off the streets. This is not a new problem. Because your government has failed to act upon this, the standing committee made these recommendations, because you have not done a thing. You have members sitting on that committee, so to say you're ignorant of the issue until you receive the report is simply ludicrous.

The TAP program is supposed to let felons out during the day to continue to work and avoid becoming a welfare burden. Right now there's a convicted drug trafficker in Brockville who was sentenced to nine months in jail. After only a month, he's released back into the community to serve his time in the comfort of his own home. The only restriction placed on him is that he has a 6 pm to 6 am curfew and that he report to the jail once a week. During the day, he doesn't even have to go to work, because he doesn't have a steady job, so his sentence amounts to staying at home and watching Oprah. This criminal is free to do as he pleases, because your staff do not even check to see if he's at home. It's only a matter of time before criminals such as this one commit further crimes.

I think the people of this province have a reasonable expectation that when someone is sent to jail, they will stay in jail, and when released, they will be supervised. This program is a joke. The criminals are laughing all the way home. The police are frustrated, tearing out their hair in frustration, wondering why they're doing their job. When are you going to do something about this program?

Hon Mr Christopherson: It's interesting that the temporary absence program was introduced in 1968, and at that time it had the support of all three parties here in this House. I might add that the use of that program has been expanded to its current level by previous governments that have seen the merit in this program. I would also point out that, since 1987-88, 95% of the people who were on TAPs completed those TAPs without any further incidents.

That's not to say that there are not always areas of improvement. This government, like the opposition and

like the federal government and like Canadians across this nation, is very concerned about ensuring that we have a criminal justice system that serves the people, serves those who are in the institutions, serves the people who work in those institutions and, I might add, works very closely with the police community to ensure that we have the kind of system that will provide the service Canadians want and Canadians expect.

VIDEO GAMES

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): My question is for the minister responsible for women's issues. In the past year, we have seen a tremendous increase in the number of video games that capitalize on violence against women. One game in particular is called Night Trap. The Wall Street Journal describes Night Trap as having the sound and feel of a B-grade slasher flick. According to a Toronto Star review of this game, it says: "And these aren't cartoon characters we're talking about. It features real live squealing women who serve no other purpose in this game than to be shrieking designated victims."

Minister, as you know, teen and pre-teen boys are most likely to play these video games. As the minister responsible for women's issues, do you endorse this graphically violent type of game being on the market without any limitations as to who can purchase it?

Hon Marion Boyd (Minister Responsible for Women's Issues): No. The answer is very simple: I do not; I know, as a parent and as someone who's very concerned about the effect of the kind of saturation that there appears to be of this kind of material, which is certainly very distressing, I think, to most of us. Our problems obviously are the same problems that the federal government faces and that we face in our own areas of jurisdiction within Ontario as to how we can control this kind of material without censoring other materials and getting ourselves into difficulty with civil liberties. This is a problem in every area of censorship.

Certainly I have received complaints about the particular game you mention; I'm sure some of my colleagues have as well. It is of deep concern to us.

In looking at some of the issues raised by your own colleagues, Mr Harnick and Mr Cousens, on what constitutes hate literature and so on, in both of their bills they include hate material against women. This is certainly one of the issues that we'll be looking at, at what kind of realm this kind of material fits into when we discuss whether this government, in conjunction with the opposition, is prepared to move in this area.

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Mrs Witmer: Minister, it's fine to say we need to look, but I say to you that it's time for action. We have stood in this House on many occasions to denounce violence against women. Each year we take the opportunity to remember the horrible Montreal massacre.

More recently, we have denounced the cruel and the very violent deaths of young women such as Leslie Mahaffy and Kristen French.

I strongly believe that the time for action is now. It is more important than ever before that we do everything we can to combat any and all acts and words that in any way condone violence against women. In my view, allowing our young people to purchase and, as a result, play these games without legal limitations is simply unacceptable and irresponsible. Do you agree?

Hon Mrs Boyd: I would say, as I said to the member before, that when we enter into the realm of controlling the freedom of people to read or to purchase materials and so on, we enter into a realm that has always been difficult for legislators. In terms of the choices we must make, these are very, very difficult choices that any Legislative Assembly needs to deal with.

I would say to the member that while I certainly, within my own home as a parent, would be very distressed if my child were purchasing and using such materials and would hope that other parents would exercise their responsibility as parents around this sort of thing, we have always got a very sensitive issue at stake as legislators in terms of how to control.

I will make the commitment to the member that I would be most happy to work with her and with colleagues on all sides of the House to look at what the options are around this kind of material under our current laws and to work in terms of what we need to do with our federal colleagues.

I would say to the member that one of the issues that's been raised in the issue of gender equity under the law is this whole issue of how pornography and the images of women and violence against women affect our equity under the law. We as a province have committed ourselves to that work and have expressed real concerns about the need to look at that whole area of law in terms of equity. I can assure the member that this is an area I'm committed to work on, and hope I can expect the support of her colleagues and herself on as we look at this new area of censorship.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): Madam Minister, you say that you hesitate because I think you said we enter the realm of controlling people. We control people every day. We have the Liquor Control Act, we have the Highway Traffic Act, we have municipal bylaws. There is a responsibility on us as legislators. When you say you do not endorse this kind of product on the market and then you start worrying about civil liberties versus censorship, I want to tell you, if you go out and ask the public what it thinks about this kind of material classified as entertainment, accessible to everybody, then you'd find out just how strong the argument on the side of civil liberties stands.

In fairness to the company, which puts out Night Trap, it has instituted a rating system. However, without government leadership, this is not legally binding. Night Trap can be purchased by anyone for just \$60 in most video stores. Commendably, however, Toys R Us, one of our largest toy stores, has decided not to carry Night Trap.

Minister, I want to ask you one more time: Are you, as the member of your cabinet responsible for women's issues, prepared to show some leadership by giving legal force to a rating system to ensure that video games, just like films that depict violence against women—which we haven't been able to get anywhere with, with the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations—that these kinds of material are not available to our young people?

Hon Mrs Boyd: There is a question of jurisdiction, as the member is well aware, in this area in terms of where the federal jurisdiction begins and ends and where provincial jurisdiction begins and ends. We have indicated before that there are some very, very strong questions that have been raised by me and by several of my other colleagues in terms of federal and provincial areas to look at this. We can't solve this on a province-by-province basis. There's nothing to prevent people from going outside our province, purchasing these things and bringing them in and so on.

What we are wanting to do is to look at the issue of how this fits into the general aspect of this whole area of violence against women, what constitutes an area where we are prepared to enter into some measure of control and to what extent that will be effective, given charter rights. We have to be aware of that.

I want the member to be well aware that this is not a frivolous question that's raised about people's rights around censorship. It is a serious question. I must tell you that I wish all stores were as responsible as Toys R Us and refused to carry this kind of material, and that all of us here should all be putting pressure on retail outlets and on manufacturers to stop the production of this kind of material.

ONTARIO HYDRO

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): My question is for the Minister of Finance and it concerns Ontario Hydro. The minister and the government will know that it has been reported, and now confirmed by Hydro itself, that in 1993 Hydro is expecting to report a loss someplace in the range of \$1.6 billion and that Hydro's financial situation is deteriorating as the year progresses.

My first question is to the Minister of Finance and it concerns the social contract. In today's press, the chairman of Ontario Hydro, Maurice Strong, is quoted as saying that the \$100-million target, the \$100-million cut that has been ordered by the Rae cabinet for Ontario Hydro, is "a major problem, a significant hit," and Mr

Strong adds that he's very much hopeful that he is going to be able to get out of that cut and that commitment and that he's already met or discussed this hope with Premier Rae and Energy Minister Wildman.

My question to the architect of the social contract: Finance minister, do you and your colleagues in the Rae government intend to relieve Mr Strong and Ontario Hydro of their \$100-million saving that is part of your social contract for this year?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): There have indeed been a number of meetings with Mr Strong and several members of cabinet dealing with the restructuring of Hydro and the link between the restructuring and the social contract. The target under the agencies, boards and commissions sector of the social contract includes Ontario Hydro, and the target was, as the member for Renfrew North indicated, about \$100 million.

The negotiations with Ontario Hydro, as with other agencies, boards and commissions, are going on now, and we have quite assiduously avoided carrying on those negotiations either in the media or on the floor of the Legislature. I would simply say to the member for Renfrew North that I have every reason to believe that the matter will indeed be resolved and that Ontario Hydro will achieve the savings that will be negotiated at the subsector table, the agencies, boards and commissions table of the social contract bargaining.

Mr Conway: I simply will refer the Treasurer to the answer given a week ago today to a question I asked his colleague the Minister of Energy on this very point. Like the stumpage issue, the government policy is shifting, and shifting very quickly. I'm going to be back to this later with the Minister of Energy, but I'm not clear what the government policy is.

My second question has to do with the situation at Hydro. Revenues are down, sales are down, the cost of the restructuring is up, and is expected to be up considerably, by about an additional \$200 million. Will the Treasurer, on behalf of the government and the people of Ontario, undertake, through section 37(4) of the Ontario Energy Board Act, to refer the current financial situation at Ontario Hydro to the energy board for an independent adjudication so that we can all of us, in the Legislature and outside, in the province have an independent evaluation of what we are increasingly led to believe is a serious and financially deteriorating situation at the giant utility?

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Hon Mr Laughren: I do think we need to put the numbers, which are very large, in some kind of perspective. It was not unexpected that there would be a substantial write-down because of the restructuring that's going on and the write-down of assets and so forth. That was, I think, anticipated and expected by thoughtful, knowledgeable observers of Ontario Hydro

as it engaged in its restructuring process. The sales for the first six months of this year were off, I think, around \$460 million, as I recall, which I believe is about an 8% reduction in sales.

So the biggest proportion of the problem to which the member for Renfrew North refers comes from the restructuring of Ontario Hydro, not from a sudden plummeting of sales, although I would certainly be the first to acknowledge that one of the problems at Hydro has been the decline in revenues, largely because of the recession and the rather slow recovery that we're experiencing in the recession.

But Ontario Hydro, through Mr Strong, still believes that it's going to be able to achieve its targets of rate freezes in the next couple of years so that Hydro can be, at the same time, appropriately downsized. I can tell the member for Renfrew North—and I can recall him in this House standing in his place and asking me questions about how I expected people to be able to cope with double-digit increases in hydro rates in his own valley—I think that Mr Strong is on the right track and that restructuring must go on. While that's happening, it's inevitable that because of the write-downs of the assets there's going to be an interim period when Hydro's balance sheet or profit and loss statement doesn't look very healthy.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I want to ask the Finance minister as well about Ontario Hydro. I understand about the write-downs that are taking place and the costs associated with those. You suggested that fairminded people would accept that. I think they have. The great concern is this: In a period of a couple of months, this giant utility has gone from hundreds of millions of dollars of profit to hundreds of millions of dollars of losses. That is very concerning to the people out there.

This utility has also committed to no rate increase. At the end of this year, they're going to use up all their reserves, \$1.6 billion, and be left with nothing to stabilize rates in the future. There is real concern out there from the major users.

Obviously this is causing some concern across the floor. Clearly, there's some concern with the Minister of Environment and Energy. What plans do you have, besides saying the recession, to stabilize this very serious problem facing not only the utility but yourselves, by underwriting the debt, and the constituents of this province? What are your plans?

Hon Mr Laughren: I do believe that Ontario Hydro is on the right track with its restructuring. I believe that's the number one thing that must occur, because I believe the member for Etobicoke West would be the first to agree that the rate of increases experienced by the users of hydro in this province were unsustainable.

From a competitive basis, we simply couldn't continue the way we were going, so something had to be done. I give Mr Strong and the Ontario Hydro board credit for working extremely hard to restructure Ontario Hydro. It simply had to be downsized; it couldn't sustain the compensation levels it had, and I believe they are on the right track.

But if the member for Etobicoke West is implying—and I'm sure he'll straighten me out in his supplementary if I'm wrong here—that Ontario Hydro now should engage in a series of rate increases in order to put itself on what might be described as a more solid financial footing, I think that would not be the right direction. But on the other hand, I await to hear further from both the member opposite and from Mr Strong.

Mr Stockwell: I guess what I want to know and what the people of the province would like to know is, what are their plans to right this wrong? Clearly, you're talking about unloading some staff and writing down some capital and so on and so forth. That in itself is not going to generate any more revenue.

Having them send you \$100 million as part of the social contract seems to me to be the ultimate in robbing Peter to pay Paul. It makes absolutely no economic sense to have a losing utility send you a cheque for \$100 million, write up more debt on its behalf, so you can write down some debt on your behalf. That doesn't seem to me to be a manageable, sensible plan.

All I've heard from the Minister of Energy and Mr Strong is: "We were going to make money this year. We've righted this ship. We're profitable. Yes, it's been painful, but we're profitable." I thought he was doing a fine job up until yesterday, because suddenly we're no longer profitable. In fact, we're losing a lot of money.

The question I put to the Treasurer is this. I'll tell you what I'd like to do, but I think more importantly I'd like to know what your government is going to do. An 8% reduction in revenue, \$1.6 billion in write-downs, \$100 million from their debt to pay down your debt, and you're suggesting to me that things are going well. I don't think the people of this province think that's a good plan.

The Speaker: Would the member conclude his question, please.

Mr Stockwell: What I'd like to know is, how are you going to get revenues up? The only way to make it profitable, the only way to retire debt, is to increase revenues. I've not heard a plan yet. Can you enlighten us?

Hon Mr Laughren: There really should be rules in this House about tantalizing the government. The member for Etobicoke West indicated that he had an answer, but then he just dangled it out in front and didn't say what he would do.

I can only assume that when the member for Etobicoke West talks about the only solution being to increase revenues, which surprises me, because I think that controlling the expenditures of Ontario Hydro is also important, nevertheless, if he thinks that the only solution is to increase revenues, I assume, given the fact that we're slowly coming out of the recession and the natural revenue growth is not there, that means jacking up the rates, and we've tried very hard to resist that.

The second point that the member for Etobicoke West makes has to do with the social contract. Ontario Hydro is a public utility in the public sector of this province, and I believe that as such it should be asked and required to make a contribution to public sector compensation. That's why I believe, despite the pleas from the member for Etobicoke West, that Ontario Hydro should not be exempt from the requirements under the social contract.

HOG INDUSTRY

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Minister, as you're aware, Ontario farmers continue to be very supportive of the relatively new national safety net program GRIP, the gross revenue insurance plan, and NISA, the net income stabilization account.

Recently, the government of Saskatchewan stated its intention to terminate its participation in GRIP in three years' time, and now a Canada-US free trade panel has confirmed a US determination that the hog tripartite stabilization plan is countervailable. This could lead to changes to the hog tripartite stabilization plan.

In light of these two events, will the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food continue to support and participate in the GRIP program, and what effect will the trade panel decision have on the Ontario hog producers?

1450

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): I'd like to thank the member for the question and just note, for her interest and the interest of farmers in the province, that last week at the federal-provincial ministers of agriculture conference, indeed we confirmed our support for a national safety net, for both GRIP and the NISA programs. We believe very strongly that safety nets are important. During our recent expenditure control exercise we in this ministry have tried to maintain safety nets for farmers.

In reference to the hog industry and the member's question, at the conference last week we looked at the national tripartite stabilization program which is offered for cattle, hogs and sheep and lambs. At that point we decided to terminate the program for cattle at the end of 1993.

With reference to the hog industry, we are going to wait and consult with the hog producers in Ontario and across the country to decide whether or not that pro-

gram will continue. We think we should consult before we make decisions on the future of that program.

Mrs Mathysen: In light of this, Minister, and I know that you're deeply concerned about the farmers of Ontario and the effect that the free trade agreement has had on that community, I wonder if you can anticipate for me the effects of the NAFTA plan that the federal Tories are determined to push ahead with.

Hon Mr Buchanan: With regard to NAFTA, I might point out that the hog industry in Ontario, when the FTA came in, were quite optimistic. They felt there were going to be a lot of opportunities for export of hogs to the US. They have experienced a great deal of difficulty with shipping live hogs to the US. We've suffered several countervails. They've won several panels, and it seems, even though we win each time, there's always an appeal and we seem to have another loss. Recently, we had another experience where there's a countervail against Ontario and Canadian hogs.

We believe NAFTA is going to continue with that kind of exercise, and we don't think the opportunities are going to be there that the hog producers felt there were going to be with the FTA. We continue to work with the industry. The hog industry wants to get into the export field. We will continue to work with them, but NAFTA, quite frankly, is probably not the future for several sectors of agriculture. In the production of horticultural products, for example, it's going to make it very difficult for us to compete.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): My question was to be directed to the Minister of Health, who appears to be absent from the House, but just in case she is coming back, I'd like to tell you that today I'm wearing a button that says, "Bob Rae's NDP government could be hazardous to your health." I believe that the minister's coming—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member for Halton Centre, with the minister not being present in the House, you could direct your question to the Deputy Premier.

Mrs Sullivan: I'm certainly willing to direct my question to the Deputy Premier. I suggest that the wording on the button I'm wearing should be changed to "Warning: Bob Rae's NDP government is hazardous to your health."

I'd like to know of the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Finance if he has advised the federal government and the federal Minister of Health that Ontario is withdrawing from medicare.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): I don't think so.

Mrs Sullivan: The Treasurer should know the answer to that question, and in fact Mary Collins should have been advised by now of his answer.

Bill 50 is a complete breach of the Canada Health Act and destroys medicare in Ontario. With Bill 50 the basic guarantees of medicare are destroyed. We will no longer have a universal, accessible health care system because Bill 50 takes those aspects away. My party will not allow this to happen, and we will fight alongside every person in Ontario to make sure that you and your party do not destroy medicare.

We demand that this government withdraw Bill 50. I ask the Treasurer today, will you withdraw Bill 50?

Hon Mr Laughren: I shall attempt to give a serious answer to a question which I'm not too sure was terribly serious, because the member from Halton should understand that in the 1990s, if we're going to continue to have universally accessible medicare in this province, we have to reverse the ridiculous trend of the 1980s when the Liberals allowed health care to increase at 11% a year each year over the previous year.

This party has a commitment second to none when it comes to the preservation of medicare. But I can tell the member opposite that if we're going to preserve universal medicare in this province and in this country, we have to control its costs, and that's what we're doing in a thoughtful way. I can tell you, Mr Speaker, the biggest threat to medicare in this province was the Liberal attitude of letting spending go unchecked during the 1980s, because that was unsustainable.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have a question for the Minister of Citizenship. The regulations for Bill 79 provide very broad definitions for each designated group and allow employees to voluntarily self-identify to which group they belong. This is contributing to concerns about the reliability of the data that are to be collected in the workplace survey. It is conceivable that people could decide not to identify themselves as members of the designated groups or be tempted to falsely designate themselves as members of a designated group in order to obtain employment preferences.

Consider the definition of racial minority. In a workplace survey, employees will be told that, "A person is a member of a racial minority if, because of his or her race or skin colour, the person is a visible minority in Ontario." The employees are then asked, "Based on this description, do you consider yourself to be a member of a racial minority?" A choice will then be made which the employer cannot challenge.

The danger that people will not identify or not properly identify themselves in a survey could be eliminated by some form of supervisor identification, which was favoured by employers during the consultation. Could you explain why you did not adopt the recommendation?

Hon Elaine Ziemba (Minister of Citizenship and

Minister Responsible for Human Rights, Disability Issues, Seniors' Issues and Race Relations): First of all, let me explain very clearly that under the Human Rights Code and other areas we must be very careful that people are given the option for self-identification. That's very clear, and I want to make that point.

But I also want to make the point that we consulted very widely with employers, and we consulted with the labour movement and designated groups.

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): Why don't you put a label on everybody? Put a little label on everybody.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Willowdale.

Mr Harnick: As they are born you can stamp them. You can stamp on their foreheads.

The Speaker: The member for Willowdale, come to order.

Hon Ms Ziemba: In that very broad consultation across Ontario, we very clearly heard that if we are going to make sure that people have their rights enshrined we must make very sure that people have self-identification.

Mr Harnick: Making you a little uncomfortable, Cooke?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): No, you embarrass everybody.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Willowdale, please come to order.

Hon Ms Ziemba: I must say very clearly that in the consultation we did with employers, and there were over 51 employers involved in testing the regulations, they said very clearly to us that if we were to make this work, education was a primary focus that must happen before we do employment systems review.

In that educational process, employees will be given the information needed to know about self-identification, and I think that's the very important component of employment equity, education, making sure people understand about equality and equity rights—

Mr Harnick: Remember how successful the survey from the Premier's office was. Did you see that survey, Cooke? If you want to see anything racist, go look at the Premier's survey.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Ms Ziemba: —and to make sure that your colleague who sits next to you understands as well that employment equity is about fairness and equality, and it's not about pigeonholing people.

1500

Mrs Witmer: Madam Minister, this is an important issue, the issue of definition, the issue of voluntary self-identification, because, as you know, the data collected in the workforce survey are going to form the

basis of the employer's employment equity plan. I think you can educate the workforce. However, there is no compulsion for them to identify themselves.

There's also concern that individuals who have been accommodated by an employer at considerable cost could still refuse to self-identify, notwithstanding their obvious membership in a designated group.

In the case, for example, of a member, of a person with a disability, there may be a very strong incentive against self-identification for fear that honest responses about invisible medical conditions such as epilepsy might jeopardize their career promotions.

Bill 79's definition of a person with disabilities is the same as the definition that is found in the federal act. As you know, this is a definition which has proved to be very problematic. The federal Employment Equity Act has been challenged recently in the court by the Bank of Nova Scotia—

The Speaker: Could the member place a question, please.

Mrs Witmer: —and the Toronto-Dominion Bank as being too vague in that it cannot be determined with certainty which employees fall within its scope.

Given that the federal definition is being challenged, why was it—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs Witmer: Mr Speaker, I am very disappointed that the government is not concerned about the employment equity definitions.

The Speaker: Could the member please place a question.

Mrs Witmer: If we are to really, truly consult with all the people in the province, then we must address these issues. My question is this—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs Witmer: I know that the member for Durham Centre is not interested in employment equity.

The Speaker: Could the member place a question.

Mrs Witmer: Given that the federal definition of "disability" is being challenged in the courts, why was it adopted for Bill 79?

Hon Ms Ziemba: I want to respond about our caucus being very interested in employment equity, to say to you that the people who were heckling when I was answering the question came from the opposition. But to go on to why the definition was adopted consistent with the federal policy is that we heard very clearly from the people with disabilities who identify with this definition that this is a definition they wish to have. I think this is extremely important, that the people who can identify with the definition have an understanding

and feel that it works and helps them.

We are also working very closely with the federal government to make sure that our definitions are compatible, so that when we have employers who are good employers, who have already worked on employment equity, who have made sure that their plans are working—

Mr Harnick: You just see how this is going to promote racial tolerance.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Willowdale.

Hon Ms Ziemba: Both the federal government and the provincial government are working very hard to have a compatible definition so that when we have our legislation, we can work very closely with employers who are already following with the contract compliance under the federal jurisdiction.

I want to follow up from what the member opposite has said about employers and about employees who might not self-identify. The employers who have had self-identification and have worked on employment equity plans in the past have told us very clearly that if educational and promoted and done properly, they get a 95% response, that there is not the variance that you have said. In fact, most employees do want to self-identify, because they know it's going to help the whole workplace, and people who understand employment equity realize this is a benefit for all society and not just for the designated groups.

The Speaker: Could the minister conclude her response please.

Hon Ms Ziemba: I look forward to your response this afternoon and to working with you, and the Liberal caucus as well, to make sure that this plan works for all Ontarians and that we can have an employment equity plan that is fair and equitable and does the job it's supposed to do.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I know that it is against the rules of the House to introduce someone who may be in the members' galleries, but if I pointed out that Mary Baxter, a former assistant of mine, is sitting in the east gallery with her grandchild, would that be in order? Mary is up in the east gallery.

The Speaker: No, it's not in order, but of course you'll make sure that Hansard has the correct spelling of the name.

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: I'm having a difficult time trying to follow and pay attention, and the member for Willowdale kept interrupting during the minister's comments. I think it's important for disabled people. As a disabled person I like to follow the comments, and I would appreciate if people wouldn't interject like that.

I also don't find that kind of behaviour parliamentary. If we could talk one at a time with a little bit of respect for all the members of the House, I'd appreciate that.

The Speaker: To the member for York East, indeed, all interjections are out of order, and I always encourage members to resist the temptation.

Pursuant to standing order 34(a), the member for York Mills has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the member for Etobicoke West take his seat, please.

Pursuant to standing order 34(a), the member for York Mills has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Education and Training concerning savings through the social contract to be paid to Metropolitan Toronto property taxpayers. This matter will be debated today at 6 pm.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I move that Mrs Mathysen and Mr Morrow exchange places in the order of precedence for private members' public business, and that Mr Morin and Mr Mahoney exchange places in the order of precedence for private members' public business.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: On the point of order of the member for York East, I would also like to note, although he just mentioned the member for Willowdale, that there were a number of people who were also interrupting and heckling on the other side of the House and I think that should be noted for Hansard.

The Speaker: To the member for Etobicoke West, indeed, I indicated that all interjections are out of order.

PETITIONS

DRUG BENEFITS

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario which reads as follows:

"Whereas the introduction of Bill 29 makes substantial changes to the Ontario drug benefit program that would allow the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make unilateral and significant changes to the Ontario Drug Benefit Act through regulation and without consultation with seniors nor negotiation with pharmacists;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly to adopt the amendments to Bill 29 as proposed by the Ontario Pharmacists' Association, which are affixed to this petition."

This petition underlines the destruction of the medicare system, and I affix my signature to it.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

That was sent to me by parishioners at the Trinity United Church in Beeton, and most particularly I'm grateful to Lee Haughton for sending that to me. It's signed by good people like Rhonda Tilley, Stuart Magloughlen, Ron Beusaert, Brenda Lisk and others, and I too have affixed my name to that petition.

1510

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I have a petition to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it says,

"From the people of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That free and open collective bargaining for public service employees be restored and be returned to its honourable position in Ontario.

"That the social contract in its present form be destroyed and that the valuable programs and services in the public sector be maintained for the betterment of all Ontarians;

"That the government withdraw Bill 48 and, in place of this bill, the government work cooperatively with the public service unions to find an equitable solution rather than eliminating valuable public services."

This petition is signed by 275 residents of my own riding of Peterborough and also of the riding of

Hastings-Peterborough.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas logging contractors and companies cannot afford an increase in stumpage fees; and

"Whereas an increase could result in the complete shutdown of all log-related manufacturing firms and logging contractors,

"We, the undersigned, respectfully submit that the increase in stumpage fees announced in the 1993 budget be revoked immediately."

I have the petition signed by several hundred people from northwestern Ontario and I've affixed my own signature.

GAMBLING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I'm very happy to add my support to this petition.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mrs Karen Haslam (Perth): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

ALCOHOL ABUSE

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the sale of rice wine has become a problem of aesthetic and ethical proportions for the residents of Cabbagetown;

"Whereas the coroner's report of November 13, 1985, recommends that, like stomach bitters, rice wine be treated as an alcoholic beverage with suitable controls;

"Whereas LCB control of rice wine is important,

"The undersigned—"a number of members of the fine riding of St George-St David—"have petitioned the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"Would the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations look into the need to make rice cooking wine a controlled substance available only through the LCBO and, as recommended by the aforementioned coroner's report, establish an upper limit for alcohol content of alcoholic products sold outside the LCBO."

It's signed by a number of fine members of my community and I've affixed my signature as well.

COURT REPORTERS

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas open and public trials require an accurate record prepared by those trained for that purpose; and

"Whereas the proposed model of a clerk-monitor taping the proceedings, non-stop taping of each courtroom, even during recesses, and a typist transcribing proceedings which were not attended is inimical to the proper administration of justice in Ontario,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ontario Court of Justice maintain the use of court reporters to keep the record of all court proceedings."

I've affixed my name to this petition.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I have a

petition to the members of the provincial Parliament in regard to the amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act, the proposed wide-open Sunday shopping and elimination of Sunday as a legal holiday.

It states:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I affix my signature to this petition.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38.

"We believe that this bill defies God's laws, violates the principle of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection to workers regarding when they must work and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province.

"The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man but dates from God's creation and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all people, both physically and spiritually.

"We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

It's signed by 228 residents of my riding and other parts of Ontario. I affix my signature.

HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Patients from my riding of Oakville South and the surrounding area have asked me to table a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we are concerned about the proposed NDP government's decrease in radiology technical fees for general radiology, ultrasound and nuclear medical examinations; and

"Whereas these cuts will have a severe impact on health care services; and

"Whereas it will result in waiting lists, layoffs of staff, eliminating access to newer and continually improving diagnostic technologies; and

"Whereas these services are necessary to ensure that Ontarians receive high-quality health care that is delivered effectively and efficiently;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario not to threaten radiology services with cutbacks."

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): I have a petition signed by a number of residents of London and Middlesex who wish to register their opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, wish to affirm the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, and ask that Sunday remain as a legal holiday all year round.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I have signed the petition.

DRUG BENEFITS

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the members of the United Senior Citizens of Ontario in Clifford, are very concerned re the announcement of Floyd Laughren about his expenditure control plan. This plan of his included reductions in health care services by \$4 billion.

"This means that the Ontario drug benefit program is in jeopardy. The programs to be reformed are pharmacy services, management of nutritional products and over-the-counter products. There will also be price changes and cost-sharing; in other words, user fees.

"This statement has caused a great deal of shock and anger and frustration among the seniors of this province and in particular our members.

"We, the undersigned, would like very much if you

could bring this issue before the Parliament stating our concerns in this matter.”

It's signed by approximately 20 senior citizens from the senior citizens' club in Clifford.

1520

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): I have a petition to the members of the provincial Parliament regarding the amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act, proposed wide- open Sunday shopping and elimination of Sunday as a legal holiday.

“I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of ‘legal holiday’ in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

“I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

“The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of ‘legal holiday’ and reclassify them as working days should be defeated.”

This was signed by over 400 people in my area.

HEALTH SERVICES

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition signed by numerous patients and doctors in my riding of Eglinton:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

“Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement.”

I concur with this petition and have affixed my signature to it.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Constituents in my riding of Oakville South and the surrounding area have asked me to table a petition which reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas we believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom; and

“Whereas the elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families; and

“Whereas the amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of ‘legal holiday’ and reclassify them as working days;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to defeat Bill 38.”

HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): I have a petition that is put together by the Kent County Medical Society which reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“As the proposals made under the government's cost-cutting measures regarding health care in Ontario will have a devastating impact on the availability and quality of health care services in Kent county;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement.”

On behalf of those constituents, I wish to put forward this petition.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ EN MATIÈRE D'EMPLOI

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 79, An Act to provide for Employment Equity for Aboriginal People, People with Disabilities, Members of Racial Minorities and Women / Loi prévoyant l'équité en matière d'emploi pour les autochtones, les personnes handicapées, les membres des minorités raciales et les femmes.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): The last time, we had not done questions and comments on the remarks of the member for Scarborough North.

Interjection: He's not here.

The Deputy Speaker: He's not here. Therefore, we'll proceed with Mrs Witmer.

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I'm pleased to have the opportunity, as the member responsible for the PC caucus, to deal with Bill 79, the Employment Equity Act, which received first reading on June 25, 1992.

I want you to know that our party is very, very

supportive of equal employment opportunities for everyone. However, we do have some very serious reservations about the principle of legislated quotas as a means of ensuring that women, visible minorities, native Canadians and individuals with disabilities are given equal access to the job market. We would prefer an approach which deals directly with the very specific employment access problems which women, visible minorities, native Canadians and individuals with disabilities face.

Perhaps one of the greatest barriers that the designated groups face is the lack of appropriate education and training, as well as physical barriers and, certainly in the case of immigrants, language skills. I know that from my own personal experience, being the daughter of immigrants who had to learn the language, and I know how it prevented their access to employment opportunities.

Our party also believes that the government should be doing much more to encourage and assist employers to establish voluntary employment equity programs. As the legislation is presently structured, the burden, the responsibility, for employment equity in this province now rests solely on the shoulders of the employers. We believe that arbitrary government intervention is never a substitute for merit and fairness in the workplace.

The objective of Bill 79 is to ensure that every employer's workforce, in all occupational categories and at all levels of employment, reflects the designated groups' representation by the population in the community. Employers are going to be required to review their current hiring practices and develop employment equity plans that will conform with the prescribed regulations and then set specific goals and timetables for achieving their implementation.

This bill does represent the most far-reaching employment equity legislation in North America and perhaps, as the minister has proudly stated, in the world. Unfortunately, the bill is based on the premise that all employers engage in deliberate and systemic discriminatory practices and blames all inequalities which presently exist in the workforce on employer conduct. I'm going to speak more to that issue later.

A policy of employment equity which seeks to ensure fairness and non-discrimination in employment practices is very positive and it certainly is beneficial for all organizations. Hiring and promoting the best people from all segments of our society does make very good sense for Ontario employers and certainly for the employees in this province as well. But the question has to be asked, will the benefits of mandatory employment equity legislation for both the public and the private sector outweigh the compliance costs? Most employers, I would like to state, do support employment equity, but they are fearful at the prospect of the government mandating the collection and the reporting of reams of

material. We also should recognize that by the year 2003—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: This is an important issue, and there should be a quorum here to hear it.

The Deputy Speaker: Would you please verify if there is a quorum.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is now present. The member for Waterloo North.

Mrs Witmer: I'd like to deal with the historical overview of Bill 79. As we know, employment equity has always been a stated goal of the NDP government. It was an element of the 1985 accord with the Liberals.

In May 1990, the now Premier, Mr Rae, introduced a private member's bill, Bill 172, that would have required all companies with annual payrolls of more than \$300,000 to develop and post detailed employment equity plans within one year. Penalties for failing to comply included fines of up to \$100,000 for a first offence and \$200,000 on any subsequent offence, with the legal onus on firms to prove innocence once a complaint from an employee had been lodged.

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In November 1990 in their first throne speech, and in each subsequent throne speech, the government has identified employment equity as a government priority. In March 1991, the government appointed an Employment Equity Commissioner, Juanita Westmoreland-Traoré. On November 5, 1991, the discussion paper Working Towards Equality was released by the Ministry of Citizenship office of the Employment Equity Commissioner. Between January and March 1992, a consultation process involving public hearings took place in nine Ontario cities. During that time, the Employment Equity Commission did receive approximately 400 briefs which they indicate they have used as a basis for Bill 79.

Although the commission asked for public input and did receive these briefs, the government's bottom line has always been that employment equity will be legislated and it will be mandatory for both public and private sector workplaces in Ontario.

On June 25, 1992, Bill 79 was introduced and a second discussion paper, Opening Doors, based on the public consultations, was released. Then, of course, on June 16 of this year, the draft regulations for Bill 79 were released, and the government is going to be accepting submissions on the regulations until October 29, 1993.

Let's take a look at the substance. On June 25, 1992, the Minister of Citizenship introduced mandatory employment equity legislation. The legislation targets

four designated groups: aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, racial minorities and women.

The public, the broader public and the private sectors will be required to comply in varying degrees with the legislation. The draft regulations for Bill 79 provide detail on the definition of the designated groups, the reporting procedures and employee participation in both organized and unorganized workplaces. Regulations on how the act applies to aboriginal workplaces and the construction industry are presently being developed separately.

Let's take a look at the Ontario public service, the broader public sector employers such as our hospitals, our municipalities and our school boards who have 50 or more employees and the private sector employers with 100 or more employees, because these individuals are going to be subject to full requirements. What does that mean? That means that a workplace analysis will take place to determine the present status of their employees. That's where the self-identification takes place. There will be a review of formal and informal hiring employment practices to identify any that may be discriminatory, and there will be the development and implementation of an employment equity plan which will include numerical goals and timetables.

There will be streamlined requirements, as opposed to full requirements, that will be developed by regulation for the broader public sector employers with 10 to 49 employees and the private sector employers with 50 to 99 employees. Small businesses with 50 or fewer employees will be exempt as will broader public sector employers with 10 workers or less.

What's been told to us is that the legislation is going to be phased in, the time is going to depend on the size and the sector and after the proclamation of the legislation, compliance will be required as follows: 12 months for the public sector, 18 months for the broader public and private sector employer with 500 employees or more, 24 months for employers with 100 to 499 employees and 36 months for employers with 50 to 99 employees.

The Employment Equity Commission is going to be established to implement, administer and monitor compliance. They are going to be responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the measures being taken by employers. They are going to have considerable power to interpret the act.

Let's take a look at what's happening at the present time at the federal level. In 1986 the federal government proclaimed its Employment Equity Act, and it requires 33 crown corporations and 397 federally regulated companies to file annual reports on the employment status of designated groups within their establishment.

The law has been criticized because it does not set penalties for failure to meet goals, and there has also

been some criticism of the definitions. Unfortunately, as I pointed out earlier today, we are using the same definition of "disabled" as is presently being challenged in the courts under the federal regulation.

I want to point out again that no other province has such far-reaching employment equity laws for the private sector, although Quebec does have a law for companies that do business with the provincial government.

I want to now take a look at the actual bill itself, starting with the preamble. The form and the content of the preamble are without precedent in Ontario. No other statute contains as lengthy and accusatory a preamble, setting out why the legislation is required. The accepted form of a preamble in this province is a short, concise statement which establishes the purpose and the objects of the legislation. It is totally inappropriate for a preamble to state as a conclusive finding that the underrepresentation of members of designated groups in most areas of employment is the result of "intentional and systemic discrimination."

Discrimination is partially responsible for a percentage of the problem, but it cannot be denied that other factors have also contributed to the underrepresentation of designated group members in the workforce, and this is what the government should acknowledge. This bill fails totally to acknowledge that underrepresentation of the designated groups in the workplace results from many historical, social and demographic factors. I'd like to speak to four of them.

First of all, we need to remember that the individuals who make up an employer's present workforce may have been hired at a time when the composition of the community from which the workforce was hired was different than the present day.

Further, this bill totally ignores the educational and the training barriers which do prevent members of the designated groups from acquiring the skills that are necessary to enter various positions. When I met with women from the women's directorate, they indicated to me that they recognized that one of the greatest barriers for women in moving up the employment ladder was the lack of education and the lack of training. Those opportunities needed to be provided for women, and that's been totally overlooked by this government. They fail to acknowledge that's been a factor in the underrepresentation of women in the workplace.

Thirdly, social conditions such as the availability of child care or transportation for the disabled have been a reason for the underrepresentation of the designated groups in the workplace. For any mother, and I acknowledge that myself, the lack of availability of child care does present a very formidable obstacle.

Finally, the bill fails to acknowledge that the operation of seniority principles and collective agreements

is part of the reason that the designated groups are underrepresented in the workplace.

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The failure to recognize, or take steps to recognize and rectify these factors, and at the same time to then require employers to achieve employment equity in spite of these factors is somewhat unreasonable. I ask, what measures has the government introduced to ensure that members of the designated groups do have access to training and educational programs? The government has chosen to require the private sector to assume responsibility for employment equity rather than address the education equity issues that are primarily the responsibilities of the province.

Also, the province, the government, needs to address the pre-market discrimination. They need to make a commitment to public expenditures such as child care, such as student loans, such as English-as-a-second-language training and skills upgrading. I know there are many people in my own community who wish to attend the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University who are prevented from doing so because of child care and because of a lack of availability of student loans. We need to be taking a look at addressing pre-market discrimination.

I'd like to take a look now at "entitlement," section 1. Bill 79 refers to the Ontario Human Rights Code and the right of every person to equal treatment in employment, but in fact overrides the code's requirements with respect to the designated groups because distinctions, which employers have been prohibited from making under the Ontario Human Rights Code, such as distinction based on race, will now become required to achieve employment equity goals.

The bill indicates that the Human Rights Commission is to refer complaints against employers to the Employment Equity Commission. However, the reference to the Ontario Human Rights Code in the act creates the very real potential for both the Employment Equity Commission and the Human Rights Commission to assert that they have authority to investigate a complaint arising out of the act. This may result in the development of inconsistent decisions and it's certainly going to create confusion for employers in this province. An employer could even be faced with double jeopardy if both commissions decided to proceed with a complaint.

The reference to the Ontario Human Rights Code is inappropriate because, although Bill 79 and the code may be related pieces of legislation, they are directed at two very different issues. Employment equity is concerned with the composition of an employer's workforce without regard to the identity of specific individuals. Human rights legislation, in contrast, does not deal with collective employer statistics but rather is directed at the treatment of individuals by employers. I hope the government will take a look at that section 1.

Section 2, "employment equity principles": Principle 2 requires employers to "reflect the representation of aboriginal people, people with disabilities, members of racial minorities and women in the community" in their workforce.

Employers will be required to ensure that workplaces in all occupational categories reflect the number of individuals from the four designated groups in the same proportions as these individuals exist in the community at large. This proportionality requirement defines the labour pool in a far broader manner than a true labour pool because it fails to recognize that not all members of the designated groups are both available or qualified to do the work. We know that since education and training have been a barrier, there are, unfortunately, many who are not qualified to do the work, and that's where we need to be concentrating our energy and our attention: on making sure they have the educational and training qualifications to compete.

The bill should be amended to make it clear that employers will only be required to ensure that their workforce reflects the representation of qualified members of the designated groups in the community.

Proportionality may also be an unattainable standard for many employers. It would be extremely unlikely that an employer with fewer than 500 employees would have a chance of having proportional representation of all designated groups in all occupational levels.

"Definitions," section 3: Definitions for the terms "members of racial minorities," "aboriginal people" and "people with disabilities" are not defined in the act. The definitions included in the regulations are vague, and I've pointed that out earlier today. It can certainly lead to employee confusion when they fill out their employment equity surveys, no matter how much education you provide for individuals.

The definition in the regulations for "member of a racial minority" states, "means a person who, because of his or her race or colour, is in a visible minority in Ontario." It is conceivable that because of the vagueness of this definition, an individual from Eastern Europe could identify himself or herself as a visible minority. Conversely, a person may self-identify as a Canadian only and object to being identified as a racial minority.

Recently, we have certainly read in the newspaper about the types of individuals who refuse to be identified as racial minorities because they perceive themselves to be Canadian only. I also want to mention to you that I received a letter from an individual not too long ago who indicated that he was a white male who couldn't find a job and he now is going to identify himself, because he was from Eastern Europe, as a member of a visible minority. These are the problems we're going to run into with the definitions: people identifying themselves perhaps inappropriately.

Statistics Canada census figures do not include racial group information. Statistics Canada only estimates racial population groups from information as to ethnic origin, language and religion. General population data tell us nothing about the availability for employment and include persons not even in the workforce. As a result, you can see that there are going to be some real problems.

The definition in the regulations for "persons with a disability" states, "means a person who has a persistent physical, mental, psychiatric, sensory or learning impairment and,

"(a) who considers himself or herself to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment, or

"(b) who believes that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider him or her to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment."

This is the definition I spoke about earlier today. It is the same definition as found in the federal Employment Equity Act regulations, it is a definition which has proved very problematic and it's being challenged in the courts. I really question why this government chose to use that problematic definition, because the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Toronto-Dominion Bank have indicated that it's too vague and that it cannot be determined with certainty which employees fall within its scope. The banks, both of them, have complained that the law did not allow employers to quantify accurately the number of disabled persons in their workforce because many people with disabilities did not believe they were handicapped in the context of employment.

Recently I heard from a student at one of the universities in Ontario who indicated to me that he was not going to be accepted into graduate school at this particular university because he did not identify himself as one of the four designated groups. However, he could have designated himself as a person with disabilities. He indicated he wished to be accepted because of his ability and not his disability.

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These are the types of choices that individuals across this province are going to face.

Recently, in talking to a group of students who were graduating from high school and applying to university, they were also concerned because they had been asked to self-identify and check off. One of the girls said to me, "I know the reason that I was accepted," and again it was the same university, and she said, "Because I checked off female, I checked off visible minority, I checked off disabled because I have a lisp." She said, "Mrs Witmer, I don't want to be accepted at that university because I'm designated in three groups; I want to be there because of my ability." I want you to know that young people in this province today feel very strongly and feel they can compete on a very equal

basis, and they do have some concerns about the need to self-identify.

I also know there are employees within the union workplaces who are being encouraged not to self-identify. There are going to be some very, very serious problems with the self-identification, and there is a great reluctance, I want to tell you, on the part of many individuals to identify themselves as being a member of the designated groups.

Back to the Bank of Nova Scotia and the TD Bank: The banks complained of the unfair catch-22, that the more they did to accommodate disabled persons, the less likely were those with disabilities to identify themselves as so in voluntary surveys. In fact, those two banks stated that less than 12% of their workforce with permanent impairments considered themselves to be disabled according to the federal definition. So you can see there is going to be some problem with the definitions.

Statistics Canada has stated that this definition introduced a number of subjective elements which render it—meaning a disability—a very difficult concept to measure consistently in a statistical sense since the label of disability is based on a person's own perception of being disadvantaged.

An individual may in fact have a physical impairment but not be counted as disabled if they do not consider themselves disadvantaged, and many disabled persons do not, I can assure you, consider themselves disadvantaged, and they're not.

The result of imprecise definitions is going to be either overidentification or underidentification in the voluntary self-identification process.

Reluctance to self-identify will probably affect the employer's success in achieving an accurate numerical target. There is no mechanism in Bill 79 at the present time for the employer to dispute a failure to self-identify even if the person's membership in one of the four designated groups is obvious.

It's regrettable that the government is committed to maintaining mandatory self-identification which at the federal level has been recognized as resulting in unreliable data.

I can assure the government that the issue of definition, the issue of identification is going to create some problems as we determine the targets, the goals and as we do the workplace survey, and I hope the government is prepared to introduce amendments which will alleviate some of those concerns.

I want to now take a look at the term "employer." It's defined as including trustees and receivers. Trustees and receivers are required under the provisions of the Bankruptcy Act to act in the best interests of the creditors. Obligations imposed on trustees and receivers under the act will require them to act in a manner which

may not be in the best interests of the creditors and may have the effect of reducing the creditors entitlement.

These contradictory obligations simply cannot coexist.

Let's take a look now at the implementation and the maintenance of the employment equity plans. We should recognize, up front, the cost of compliance. A proper review is either going to require the retaining of an employment equity consultant or the training of existing personnel. Many of these measures are going to require a tremendous time commitment and financial commitment on the part of the employer.

During the public consultation process, as the minister knows, many of the participants recommended the use of financial incentives and grants and the provision of low-cost or free technical resources to employers to ease the financial burden of compliance. Unfortunately, the government has totally ignored these recommendations which would have provided assistance, grants, incentives and low-cost or free technical resources to employers.

Ontario employers have the following obligations: Under Bill 79, they must recruit, they must employ, they must promote employees according to employment equity principles and the employment equity plan contained in section 8.

In line with section 12, the bill should be amended to provide that employers make reasonable efforts to implement employment equity.

The bill should state that the employer's right to hire on the basis of qualifications is maintained. Unfortunately, that is totally absent from the bill. There is no mention that the employer has the right to hire on the basis of qualifications.

Ontario employers have to ensure that staff are responsible for recruiting, supervising, evaluating or promoting employees and that those people are aware of and observe employment equity law and the employment equity plan. That's in section 8. That's quite a responsibility.

In section 9, they have a responsibility to collect employment equity workplace surveys and collect information to determine the extent to which members of the designated groups are employed. The collection of workplace information is going to create potential problems because section 9 allows employees the right to not answer the questions in the survey which provides this information. As a result, how can employers in this province be sure they are getting accurate workplace information when employees do not have to fill out the forms?

It doesn't appear that there has been any attempt made to accommodate employer concerns, which were expressed during the consultation period, that individuals who have been accommodated by an employer at considerable cost could refuse to self-identify, notwith-

standing their obvious membership in one of the four designated groups.

Employers are going to do the survey every nine years. In section 10, they are required to review their employment policies and their practices. They need to identify and remove the barriers to hiring, retention and promotion of designated groups, including terms and conditions of employment that adversely affect members of the designated groups.

The employer needs to prepare an employment equity plan which must provide for the elimination of barriers identified, the implementation of positive measures to recruit, retain and promote members of the designated groups, as well as specific goals and timetables with respect to the composition of the workforce. That's in section 11.

In the case of an employer who has a number of branches or work sites, each branch can have a separate chapter or component in the employment equity plan as long as the entire workforce is covered under one overall plan. Unionized and non-unionized employees will be covered in the same plan.

Then they need to file a certificate with the Employment Equity Commission that the plan has been prepared. This must be filed within six months, and it will include the total number of workers in each occupational group; the number of designated members in each occupational group; the number of full-time, part-time, term and seasonable workers in each occupational group; and the number of designated members in each of these categories, as well as the total number of workers who completed a workforce survey.

I think you can see there is going to be a tremendous amount of time and financial resources required to go through the steps of employment equity.

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Small employers must report the total number of employees in their workforces and the total number of designated group members in their workforce. Employers who have more than 500 workers are also going to have to provide information about the number of designated group members in four salary-range groups.

Employers must make all reasonable efforts to implement the employment equity plan and to achieve the goal in accordance with the timetable set out in section 12.

In section 13 it talks about the need for the employer to review and revise the employment equity plan every three years.

In sections 14 and 15, it asks the employer to consult with employees concerning the development, implementation and review of the plan.

Then the employer in section 16 is asked to post information about employment equity, and in section 17

he or she is required to maintain employment equity records in respect of the workforce.

Section 18 asks them to prepare a report at the end of each three-year plan, showing what progress has been made in each category. The report will only be submitted to the Employment Equity Commission upon request, and a new certificate will be required. This report at the end of each three-year plan will include the numerical goal set out in the employment equity plan; the number of job opportunities in each occupational group that were filled during three years of the plan and the number filled by designated groups; the total number of employees in each occupational group at the beginning and end of the plan; and a list of the qualitative measures in place.

Small employers will prepare a final report that states the total number of employees in the workforce and the total number of designated group members in their workforce at the beginning and end of the plan; a list of measures put in place to get rid of barriers; a list of qualitative measures that have been put into action.

I think it's very obvious that a tremendous compliance cost is going to be involved in order to implement and maintain the employment equity plans. Employers in this province at this time are going to be required to devote a tremendous amount of money and time to do the survey and to come up with the plan. As I indicated before, they are going to have to hire consultants, they're going to have to train their own personnel and, obviously, lawyers will probably be involved.

Let's take a look now at the regulations. The most disappointing aspect of Bill 79 is that most of it has been left to regulations. In many sections throughout the bill we see reference to "subject to regulation" or "as defined by regulation." Many of the difficult and the most controversial aspects of the legislation are going to be enacted and amended by way of a regulation passed in cabinet, without any opportunity whatsoever for public debate. I am very concerned that there will not be an opportunity to debate those changes. This is an important piece of legislation, and the public does need to be consulted at all times when changes are made.

There are some positive aspects of the regulations. The employee surveys, the employee system reviews, will not have to be redone if the earlier work meets the criteria, and the fact that there's equal representation on the coordinating committee of unions and management is a positive aspect, as well, of the regulations.

I'd like to take a look now at the issue of quotas. The government has continually insisted that Bill 79 is not based on quotas, yet we must acknowledge that it still is a numbers-driven system. The government has defined a quota as externally imposed—that's a very limited definition—and has defined a goal as internally generated.

I want to tell you that the dictionary, on the other hand, defines quota as "the share or proportion assigned to each in a division." The objective of Bill 79 is to ensure that every employer's workforce in all occupational categories and at all levels of employment reflects the designated groups' representation in the population in the community. If that is the objective of Bill 79, it fits the dictionary definition of quota.

The bill requires an employer to create a representative workforce by meeting "numerical goals"—in other words, quotas—within a specified period. This will inevitably create pressure on employers to hire candidates who are members of the designated groups over members of the non-designated groups in order to meet "the goals within the deadline."

The issue is not whether someone possesses the minimal skills or qualifications needed for the job but whether the most qualified candidate is going to be passed over, must be passed over, in favour of someone less qualified.

Bill 79, unfortunately, does not expressly preserve the employer's right to hire the best-qualified candidate: the merit principle. Without the merit principle, without the employer's right to hire the best-qualified candidate, race and gender may well be identified in the minds of people like never before. There may be a perception of special treatment, and anyone who does earn a position based on merit may have their achievement stigmatized by those who believe that this individual was hired to meet a quota.

Certainly we do have some concerns about the area of quotas, and also the fact that the employer's right to hire the best-qualified candidate, the merit principle, is not preserved within Bill 79.

Let's talk about the merit principle, because really, the most important question about numerical goals and timetables is whether they are consistent with the merit principle. If you remove the barriers to employment—in other words, if you remove the physical barriers, if you provide the training and the educational opportunities, if you provide language training, if you provide child care etc—then the members of the disadvantaged groups should be able to be subjected to the competitive process, and hence, hired on the same basis of merit.

Bill 79 makes no mention of job qualifications, and it does not, as I indicated before, preserve the employer's right to hire the best-qualified candidate. The employer's defence of having taken "all reasonable steps" to achieve the goals and timetables set out in the employment equity plan gives the tribunal the power to determine what is reasonable. If the employer fails to achieve the goals and timetables because of adherence to the merit principle, a fundamental issue which should be addressed in the bill and is not going to be—it is going to be decided by an agency of the government that is totally removed from the Legislature. That's a

tremendous amount of power to give to an outside agency.

Let's also take a look at how many or how great are the opportunities for any changes taking place in the workforce at the present time, recognizing that we are in a recession and that there isn't a great deal of new job creation taking place at present. In fact, most employees are desperate to retain the jobs they have.

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The difficulty of meeting the numerical goals within a timetable is going to be gravely compounded by this economic recession which we're experiencing. Because employers are reducing or simply maintaining their existing staff, there are very few opportunities existing for changing the makeup of the workforce at the present time.

As well, subsection 5(2) provides that the operation of a seniority system of layoff and recall, either under a collective agreement or an established employer practice, does not in itself constitute a barrier under employment equity which must be removed.

Now, the operation of a seniority system, as we know, tends to entrench the employment of older white male employees and disproportionately affect recent immigrants or women who have recently moved into non-traditional jobs. By preserving seniority rights, Bill 79 preserves the principle of fairness to existing employees, but it does make the employer's task of changing the makeup of the workforce very, very difficult at the present time when the economy is slow and no new jobs are being created.

Legislation which protects a union's security clause and places no obligation on the union for implementing employment equity, while at the same time holding the employer liable for failure to comply with the legislation without any exception, where the employer's efforts are effectively frustrated by the seniority clause, is totally unacceptable. The bill needs to be amended to excuse employers for non-compliance where this is due to the seniority clause.

Let's take a look now at the unionized workforces. The bill indicates that where a union represents employees, the responsibilities relating to the collection of workplace information, the review of employment policies to identify barriers, the preparation of the employment equity plan and the review and revision of the plan are to be jointly carried out by the employer and union with respect to the unionized part of the workforce. If more than one union represents employees, a committee must be formed composed of one representative of each union and representatives of the employer not exceeding the number of employee representatives. There is absolutely, and unfortunately, no mention of non-unionized employee participation on the committee that is to be formed.

Despite the fact that the union is going to be involved, the responsibility for compliance is going to rest solely with management. Bill 79, however, does require that unionized employees participate in the preparation of the employment equity plan; however, it requires that the non-unionized employees only be consulted. So it places an employer who has both unionized and non-unionized employees in a very difficult position. He or she is going to be treating those individuals differently because this government has determined that unionized employees are entitled to participation on a committee and entitled to preparation of the employment equity plan but that non-unionized employees are only to be consulted. This is very inefficient and it is certainly unfair to the non-unionized employees.

The inclusion of specific reference to a seniority system of layoff and recall in subsection 5(2) implies that the operation of seniority systems in the case of promotion is open to challenge under employment equity. Under many collective agreements, seniority is the determining factor on promotion if the applicant is qualified.

Now, if a member of the designated group applies for a promotion and is qualified, the employment equity obligation will conflict with the collective agreement. In this situation, an employer is going to be faced with either complying with the collective agreement and facing a potential discrimination claim, or he or she will violate the collective agreement to achieve the employment equity goal.

Unions may also be troubled that Bill 79 allows parties to amend a collective agreement to resolve a conflict. This could prove very expensive and it could prove very time-consuming. It would be better to allow the change to be incorporated at the expiry of the collective agreement.

Let's take a look at the cost. As I've indicated before, there's a tremendous compliance cost. I want you to know that this legislation is an employer's nightmare but it is a lawyer's and a consultant's dream, because a proper review is going to require either retraining a present employee or hiring a lawyer or consultant. As I indicated before, there's going to be a tremendous commitment of time and money involved.

Again I ask the question, will the administrative costs of employment equity affect the ability of Ontario businesses to remain competitive, particularly during the present economic climate?

Let's take a look at the cost of the commission. This bill creates yet another administrative agency, the Employment Equity Commission, and an adjudication body, the Employment Equity Tribunal. Rather than create this new layer of bureaucracy, there have been some people, particularly in the business community, who have requested that concerns about employer policies and procedures should be adjudicated by the

body already established for that purpose, the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

The 1993-94 estimates indicate that the budget for the Employment Equity Commission is going to cost \$6 million. Now, when Bill 79 was introduced in June 1992, the minister indicated that \$4 million was allocated for the commission in 1992-93. We see already that the cost has increased to \$6 million a year. If the experience of the Ontario Human Rights Commission is any example, the Employment Equity Commission will become increasingly enmeshed in fighting specific battles to the detriment of long-term policy development. I hope that's not going to be the case.

Let's take a look at the compliance costs. We know that a policy of employment equity which seeks to ensure fairness and non-discrimination in employment practices is positive and will certainly be beneficial to all organizations and all people. We also believe that hiring and promoting the best people from all segments of society makes good sense.

However, I think we need to recognize the compliance costs, the costs of collecting and reporting the reams of material and also the fact that a proper review is going to require the retention of either an employment equity consultant or a lawyer or training existing personnel.

Employers as well are going to be responsible for measures designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Examples of these measures are going to include—this is what employers are going to be responsible for—communications and human support services, for example, access to a sign language interpreter, technical aids and devices; changing the design of the job itself by using things like flexible hours of work or job sharing and changing workstations, for example, having special chairs or lowering filing cabinets; and improving access to the workplace by providing wheelchair ramps or elevators.

I think it's obvious that there is a tremendous cost involved. I think it's most unfortunate that the government did not respond to the participants who during the public consultation process, recognizing the high cost of compliance, asked that the government provide financial grants, incentives and low-cost or free technical resources to employers to ease the financial burden of compliance. It's most unfortunate that this request for some assistance has been totally ignored by the government.

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Let's look at the power of the commission. The power of the commission is troubling. Basically, the commission may, without a hearing, order an employer to take any steps specified by the commission that it considers just in achieving compliance with the legislation. The penalty for failing to comply is \$50,000.

Effectively, the tribunal can appoint someone to write and implement your employment equity plan for a business at the business's expense. This would result in quotas. Given that an organization's employment equity plan is a strategic document covering all employment practices and targeting key issues such as workplace size, composition and configuration, granting this power to the commission would be tantamount to appointing a receiver to run an employer's business.

The employer's defence to a charge of non-compliance is to prove that its plan complies and that it has made all reasonable efforts to carry out the plan and to achieve the goals set out in the plan within the timetables. Clearly, it will be vital to maintain records that support a claim of having made—

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: We don't appear to have a quorum.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Is a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals (Mr Alex D. McFedries): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Waterloo North can continue her participation in the debate.

Mrs Witmer: Speaking to the power of the commission, which I indicated I found troubling, the employer's defence to a charge of non-compliance is to prove that its plan complies and that it has made all reasonable efforts to carry out the plan and to achieve the goals set out in the plan within the timetables. Clearly, it's going to be absolutely vital for any employer to maintain records that support a claim of having made all reasonable efforts.

During the audit process, the commission has the right to arrive at an employer's workplace without advance notice and demand access to documents. That's quite a power to give to a commission.

The proposal to accept complaints is certainly also subject to controversy, because section 26 provides that anyone can launch a complaint that the legislation has been violated. As is very evident from the experience of pay equity, allowing complaints is a sure way to grind the system to a halt, particularly in the public and the broader public sectors.

At the federal level, complaints against the major chartered banks by a coalition of groups representing people with disabilities have resulted in several years of investigations and countersuits. A great deal of money, unfortunately, has been spent on lawyers as opposed to advancing the cause of employment equity.

I also hope that this government will take a look at harmonizing the reporting requirements and that this is done before Bill 79 is given royal assent. Ontario

businesses are already struggling under the heavy regulatory burden of a myriad of legislation that has been introduced by this government. Certainly, if they can harmonize the reporting requirements with the federal government, this should be done, because we need to do whatever we can to reduce the burden on the employer at the present time. The employer should be concentrating on expanding the business and creating new jobs, not on dealing with a myriad of legislation.

As I take a look at this legislation, I want to tell you that our party does have an alternative. We do believe very strongly in the need for equality of opportunity instead of equality of outcome, as is trying to be handled here. I think we have to be very careful that this legislation is not seen to be giving preferential treatment to some individuals within our province by virtue of the group to which they belong.

Our party believes very strongly in a policy of employment equity which will seek to ensure fairness, which will see non-discrimination in employment practices and which is positive and beneficial for all organizations. We believe very strongly that we must hire and we must promote the best people. Certainly I've personally been involved in a school board where that was done, where the number of women has been increased as far as positions of responsibility, but it was only done if the barriers and after those barriers to employment were removed.

The barriers I talked about before, the key barriers to employment in this province, are education and training. Unfortunately I do not see this government taking any positive steps to ensure that members from the four designated groups—women, those with disabilities, visible minorities or aboriginal Canadians—are provided with the appropriate educational and training opportunities.

Only if those barriers to employment are removed will the members of the disadvantaged groups that are referred to in this legislation be able to be subjected to the competitive process and hence hired on the basis of ability and merit, and certainly that is what most people in this province are looking for. They feel very confident that given the education, given the training and given the removal of some of the barriers, they can compete and they can compete fairly and they can qualify and will be the best individuals for the job.

This government also needs to focus on the pre-market conditions that are presently preventing these individuals from successfully competing for employment opportunities, such as child care, as I mentioned before, the student loans, the English-as-a-second-language training and the skills upgrading. These measures are absolutely essential if we're going to have economic renewal and economic justice. They are absolutely essential if we're going to have our population represented in our workforce.

Equal opportunity can only be achieved if you have economic growth and if you provide educational opportunities. In our New Directions, Volume Two, when we speak about education and training, we have outlined a number of educational and training measures that presently are preventing members from the four designated groups accessing the employment market.

I'd also like to quote from our New Directions, Volume Two, where we say:

"No quota system can substitute for equality of opportunity. Suppressing one individual's opportunity in the interest of another only imposes a new set of inequalities.

"We believe every citizen in this province must have the same opportunity for advancement. Education and training programs must be structured so that all Ontarians have the opportunity to reach their" maximum "potential. Government should be addressing any access problems which can put visible minorities, women," aboriginal people "or disabled persons with disabilities at a disadvantage in the employment market....

"No school or government in this province is ever going to be capable of ensuring equality of outcome, nor should we try to do so."

What we need to do in this province and what the focus of this legislation should be is to provide for equal employment opportunities for everyone in this province.

I hope the government has carefully listened to the presentation I've made today. I hope they will make some very significant amendments to this legislation and I hope they will give very serious consideration to preserving the employer's right to hire the best-qualified candidate for the job, because I can assure you that most people in this province want to be hired on their ability to do their job.

1630

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): Sitting listening very carefully to the member for Waterloo North's presentation, I found it quite interesting. It almost sounds like you're working against this, clearly against employment equity and the legislation. It would seem that way.

You often use terms that relate to language which to me look like discrimination yourself; for example, the use of the discriminatory terms. You talk a little bit about concern with the number and the quality, and you talk a little bit about identification process and self-identifying, and you talk about the concern of the definition of "disability." You used the words "special treatment." It seems to me the language you're using itself is somewhat discriminatory. That's an example of systemic discrimination that we want to see ended.

You talk a little bit about the concerns, and I'd like

to hear some suggestions and some constructive criticism. I've yet to hear that. You talk about a concern of employment equity legislation seeming to promote the rights of, how would one say, the concern or the rights of—you seem to advocate the rights of employers. Employment equity legislation is there to help bring a balance to both employers and their rights and also to persons who are applying for a position.

I want to make sure that when we discuss employment equity, that employment equity is that place to allow fairness and true opportunity for all people who are applying. It's important to understand that the target groups, being those aboriginal people, disabled people, women or people of visible minorities, are the people who need that chance. We want a fair opportunity, when people come to apply, to raise that balance and have true representation within the workforce. That's the intent of employment equity legislation. That's what I want to talk about.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions or comments?

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I want to compliment the member for Waterloo North. I listened to her presentation this afternoon. It was excellent, as always. I think she pointed to the need for the clarification of some of the issues with respect to this so-called employment equity bill.

I find that this government is qualified and an expert in the use of verbiage and terminology which in fact does not reflect the exact nature of the legislation. This, I would argue, is one of those cases. They're saying this is employment equity. The people of Wellington, I believe, looking at this bill, would find that it is not employment equity, that it's reverse discrimination. I find, personally, that this bill will not remove the barriers they're talking about. I think it will lead to job quotas.

From my perspective as the member for Wellington, I've always supported fair hiring practices, with an employer having the right to hire the most qualified person for the job. I think we have to support the principle of merit and the principle of excellence in hiring practices in Ontario. I'm opposed to job quotas based on race or gender. That's the position I put forward any time that anyone in our riding of Wellington has asked me my position on it. But I don't think this bill does any of that, and that concerns me greatly.

We constantly hear from the government side that there is a problem of systemic racism. I don't understand what that is. I wonder if the minister is saying that systemic racism means that most people or a majority of people or even a significant number of people are racist, if most employers are racist, that they can't see through the colour of a person's skin, can't see beyond that, or can't see beyond the sex of an individual person, if that's the only decision that they base

their hiring decision on. I wonder if that's what the government's saying.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions or comments? Seeing none, the honourable member for Waterloo North has two minutes in response.

Mrs Witmer: In response to the member for York East in questioning some of the terminology that I've used, I would just draw his attention to the preamble. Unfortunately, this preamble is without precedent, and it is very accusatory. It unfortunately does state as a conclusive finding that the underrepresentation of members of designated groups in most areas of employment is the result of intentional and systemic discrimination. Those are the words of this government in Bill 79; they are certainly not my words, and that's where they were selected.

I also pointed out that we need to recognize that although discrimination is a problem, we cannot deny that there have also been other factors at work, and that is that when the present workforce was hired, the composition of the community was different. I made reference to several other areas as well.

I believe, in conclusion—and I thank the member for Wellington for his comments—that the public needs to have some confidence in this government. They need to feel confident that the government indeed wants to be fair, wants to treat all people equally, and if that is indeed the case, then merit will need to remain the paramount criterion for hiring.

Unless that is a goal of this government, I think that some of the support for some of the initiatives that have been introduced are going to slide. The public in this province needs to know that indeed there will be fairness and that there will be equality, equal opportunity for all people as far as employment opportunities are concerned.

The Acting Speaker: I wish to thank the honourable member for her participation and response. Further debate, the honourable member for York East.

Mr Malkowski: It's a real pleasure to be able to participate and join in this debate on Bill 79, employment equity for the designated groups which it's designed to assist: aboriginal people, people with disabilities, visible minorities and women.

Employment equity legislation really, to me, is one of the most important landmark pieces of legislation in society to make sure that we have true fairness and real opportunity for those people coming from designated groups and coming from those places, and it gives people that real chance.

I want to say to people and share with you a little bit of my own experience as a disabled person myself, to talk a bit about what I've heard again and again and again all my life growing up, and all the people I've met throughout life, other people with disabilities and

many other people whom I've met from some of the other groups, and people who live in my riding of York East, coming from Thorncliffe Park as well—that's an area within my riding—and the stories I've collected.

I want to say to all of you that from all these stories and experiences, lived experiences, systemic discrimination is really what people are talking about. People have a whole host of experiences when it comes to that, and this legislation simply addresses that.

Voluntary compliance does not see any change within the workforce, and the experiences and the stories that people tell me about when people go forward to find real opportunity is one of systemic discrimination. So we take a look, as a government, at how we can truly help people participate within the employment field, to alleviate some of that frustration, because what we found after consultation is that a lot of the support services aren't there. There's a lot of barriers out there for people.

1640

Let me illustrate one of those, for example: blind people. How would a blind person know if an employer is advertising a job? They simply cannot read the newspaper, they're blind; they can't physically read that information on the page. How would they know if an employer is advertising?

How would deaf people be able to apply for a position if, let's say, you're broadcasting it or even if they read a flyer and it says, "Please contact—" and here's the phone number, but there's no TTY available for a deaf person?

Those are barriers for disabled people. How are you supposed to contact that employer? How are you supposed to get in there if they don't have a TTY or the human resources to enable you to communicate? How would you do that?

Talking about people who are in wheelchairs, often we see buildings that are simply not physically accessible to people in wheelchairs. How would you be able even to physically enter a building to get that information?

These are some real examples of lived experiences people have right here today. You need to have a full range of information so you can get into that place and full access so that you can pick up the phone and call.

Sometimes people will pick up the phone and if they hear a different-sounding voice or someone with an accent, they say, "Sorry, the job's filled." Then somebody else who may not have an accent calls and of course they say, "Yes, please do send in your résumé." Those are some of the other stories we hear, because sometimes when people call in they're discriminated against based on their accent. These are examples of stories, lived experiences that people have told me about.

The purpose of this legislation is to help remove those barriers that we see as systemic, preventing people from entering the workplace, so we have an appropriate place for people to go in, get the information they need and be able to contact people, whether that be through TTY or Braille or VoicePrint or whatever is available for people so they can have that accessible, a job bank of information that's accessible to all people. That's what we've identified as a government.

Statistics for the population of women, people with disabilities and racial minorities, if you look at the four target groups, really it's a very low percentage of stats shown within the broader group of employed people. We would say these people are really underrepresented and probably underemployed as well. Certainly, that's true within management and within the broader workforce. I think that's a shame. I want to be able to show to both the previous Liberal and the PC governments that I think there's a legacy of inequality. That's the past. We can't change the past, but there is a legacy there.

I'm very proud of the present Ontario government and our Minister of Citizenship, Elaine Ziemba. We've had the courage to introduce this legislation. It's the most important legislation to me and I think to many people within society, because it's going to bring down those barriers to allow those four target groups to have a real opportunity to get that job and to take their place within society.

I truly believe that after the consultation and identification of problems, we'll move ahead in a manner that empowers not only the employers but also leads to self-esteem and self-identification. If someone needs to come forward and say, "Listen, I need Braille," or "I need an interpreter," we need that self-identification in there so that we can accommodate the needs of those people, a real option for people. We're not forcing people to disclose who they are simply for the sake of disclosing. We want that so they can have a real chance.

I remember myself, when I was a younger fellow in high school and I was trying to apply to get different jobs, I simply wasn't given that chance. Nobody offered me that chance. I rarely even got an interview, and that was because I was deaf. They said, "Well, you can't use the phone; you're not going to be able to communicate with people," and I certainly didn't get a chance to use a sign language interpreter. So those were real barriers for me. How are you supposed to get a summer job? How are you supposed to get that summer experience? I certainly didn't have those opportunities.

When I went to university, at Gallaudet University in the States, I finally got job experience there. I had to get that outside of my own country; I had to get it in the United States. I was unable to have any Canadian experience. That forced me to look outside my own home to look for job experience in the States. I had to

put that on my résumé and come back. My point is, why are you as a society forcing me to have to move somewhere else, get the experience, then come back here on my résumé and show it to you, and you say, "Well, you don't have any Canadian experience"?

I believe that employment equity is going to go a long way to redressing some of these inequities. It's going to really give us an opportunity to build on the positive experiences of people so that people have credibility when they have résumés when they come forward to be able to participate to get that job. There are a lot of people out there with skills who just need that chance. Many disabled people are qualified and they're employable, and I think stats show that those who have been hired make great employees.

We need to be able to have the proper support services, whether that be interpreters or Brailers or whatever that is, whatever the appropriate support service is that's going to be available for people. That's the best way.

If you look at history so far, since 1985 to 1990 we heard a lot of rhetoric coming out of the Liberal government about employment equity but I saw nothing happen; nothing really changed. It's like a big square there. It was just a lot of talk but nothing really happened. This government is going to do something, and I don't want to see any kind of inaction again.

I'm very proud to stand in my place today in this Legislature and say that we support this legislation and that we're working, being proactive. Even though the economy and times are tough, we know that with the benefits of this legislation, it's really going to help people get back to work and it's going to help with the retraining endeavours initiated by this government.

In closing, I would like to say to all of you that I think it's really important for all the members here to think a little bit more when we come to this place. You tell me if all the people of Ontario are ready to accept employment equity. I think they are. You know why? Because they did vote for us and we're giving them what they want.

The New Democrat members of this government are a true example of employment equity at work. Look at who we are: We have women, a record member of women; I'm a disabled person; we have people of colour in this House, and I'm very, very proud. This is a real working model of employment equity. It can work, and the legislation just needs that chance. I encourage all of you to support it.

I would ask the members of the opposition, whether they be Liberal or Conservative, to please let's work together, let's stop the haranguing and criticism for the sake of criticizing. Give people a real chance. That old strategy simply doesn't work in this day and age. Let's have some constructive, positive criticism. If you have

real recommendations, let's hear them. I want to see that all the people of Ontario have a real chance and a real benefit, and I'm looking for your cooperation.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?

Mr Arnott: In response to the member for Waterloo North's speech, I asked the government for a definition of "systemic discrimination." I wonder if perhaps the member could go into greater detail to inform me of what he feels the systemic discrimination issue means to him.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions or comments? The member for York East, two minutes in response.

Mr Malkowski: I'm happy to respond by talking a little about systemic discrimination. We're going to talk about invisible discrimination, to compare the two, and questions of standards. We're talking in terms of responding to people when they request to get a job interview. A lot of people get that through networks and through friends and they say, "That's how I got the job." It doesn't really give other people in the broader sector a real chance for that job, because maybe the information wasn't accessible. I think employment equity will go a long way to doing that so the old network system, which I find discriminatory, is no longer in place.

When people apply and see the names on the list, whether that person be disabled or a woman or whatever kind of support service one might need, whether that be interpreters—in the past employers have said: "Sorry, we don't have interpreters here. We do not have this or that kind of support service."

That's the kind of systemic discrimination, okay? That's the concept that prevents people. I want real access for people to have a real chance. Those are the kinds of examples I'm trying to illustrate to you about systemic discrimination.

The member talked about employment a little while ago, talked a little about reverse discrimination. For heaven's sake, that in and of itself is discriminatory, systemic discrimination.

The Acting Speaker: I want to thank the honourable member for his participation and his response. Further debate?

1650

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I am pleased to enter into this debate on employment equity and specifically on Bill 79 which, as you know, is An Act to provide for Employment Equity for Aboriginal People, People with Disabilities, Members of Racial Minorities and Women. It is specifically as the critic for women's issues for the Liberal Party that I would like to make some comments today.

The debate on employment equity is not new. The pressure for employment equity is not new and some of

the fears surrounding employment equity are not new. In fact, the bill when originally introduced a year ago, because so much was contained in regulations as opposed in the body of the legislation itself, did engender a lot of fears in the community as to what quotas would mean, as to whether the government was going to be having major interferences in the businesses of Ontario and whether this was going to be the last straw for businesses struggling to survive in the midst of a devastating depression. I was going to use the word "recession" but at times, it seems to me beyond a recession, it has gone on for so long.

When the draft regulations were recently tabled, I think it alleviated some of the fears but certainly not all of the fears. Now with the regulations before us, I think it has engendered a whole new set of questions. Perhaps if I could very briefly go over some of the sections in the regulations of Bill 79 and what impact they'd have prior to making my further comments, that might be helpful.

There was a three-step mechanism for the implementation of employment equity set out in the draft regulation. The first is the workforce survey. According to what the regulations provide, employers will provide a workforce survey based on voluntary employee self-identification to determine the extent of underrepresentation of the designated groups in the workforce, and I'd like to make a few comments a bit later on that particular provision.

The second key element of the draft regulations was the review of hiring and promotion policies and practices by the employer. This would examine employment policies and practices within an employer's structure to identify barriers to employment facing the members of the designated groups.

The third key element was development and implementation of an employment equity plan. "The employers must develop and implement a plan to eliminate the barriers to employment and to increase representation of the designated groups in the workplace."

There were certain measures that must be included in the plan, for instance, an outreach program, and numerical goals for hiring and promotion had to be included. The plan was to cover a three-year period.

As far as the implementation schedule, the Ontario public service, the OPS, and broader public sectors are expected to complete their workforce survey employment systems review and development of employment equity plan within 12 months of proclamation of the bill.

Private sector employers with more than 500 employees are expected to complete this process within 18 months of proclamation. Those with 100 to 499 employees must be completed within two years. Small

employers, 50 to 99, must be completed within three years and, of course, employers who have under 50 employees would be exempt from the legislation.

Now I'd like to go into a few of the concerns that we have. There are a number of regulations that impose significant costs and significant requirements on employers.

I'll start with the workforce survey. One of the most interesting concepts about this workforce survey is that it's self-identification by the employees. In other words, for example, they'd say: "Do you consider yourself to be an aboriginal person? Are you a woman?" Results of this survey will obviously be skewed because there's no requirement that the employees actually complete the survey. They must return the survey, but they don't have to answer it.

The other question that I had, and a very significant question I believe, who's going to question a person's right to claim that they fall within a designated category? For instance, if you were a member of an employer's staff and you looked at the situation and you said: "Oh oh, we've got too many white males here. I will fill out this survey to say I'm one sixteenth black." It may or may not be true because there's nobody who can question this.

I would point to a more obvious question. When they ask, "Are you a woman?" what if you said yes when it was quite obvious to all your co-workers, to your employer, to anybody around you, maybe even to your wife, that you were a male. What penalties are there for incorrectly completing the questionnaire? The answer is none. What mechanism is in place to say employees have to fill out the questionnaire? There's actually none. They have to return it; they don't have to complete it.

The bottom line is, what validity are the questionnaires going to have if we can't, first of all, be assured that they're completed accurately and, secondly, if people aren't required to complete them? I just see that this is a bureaucratic measure that's been put in that isn't all that well thought out.

I can see why the government might say: "Well, this will actually decrease the costs of the employer because the employer can just have the employees fill it out themselves. He doesn't need an expensive consultant." That's certainly a valid point, but if you have a questionnaire where you can't rely on the validity of the results, and when it is almost certain that in some cases the employees may fill out the form incorrectly because they think it may guarantee them a job in that particular place, what is the employer to do? You then have a mechanism that is inaccurate and a mechanism that isn't going to help the employer see what the problem is, and there are no penalties for non-compliance. So the bottom line is we have an unworkable and unenforceable mechanism here.

I'd like to take a look at the employment equity plan itself. This section requires employers to set numeric goals—notice I didn't say quotas—for representation of each of the designated groups at every level of the workforce. The employer is required to look at the composition of the working-age population within a particular geographic area in order to develop these goals. Employers are only required to look to the number of persons with the right skills or qualifications for a specific job.

I'm glad to see that this provision is in there, but I still do have some concerns with how this is set up. When it says composition of the working-age population within a particular geographic area, how wide is that geographic area going to be?

For instance, in my riding of Eglinton—I'm in a Metro riding, actually a Toronto riding, but we are very different from the makeup of the rest of Toronto, and the rest of Metro for that matter, in the composition of the people who live and work in our particular riding.

I would submit to you that employers in the last number of years have become much more sensitive to the composition of their workforce. For instance, when I walk into my bank, I notice that there are people who you would call visible minorities working there, a large number of women working there. I'm not saying it was for any altruistic reason, but the banker, as an employer, has decided that it makes good business sense to have people serving the customers who reflect their diversity and their makeup. So I would submit to you that some of these changes are already happening.

But what happens in an area such as mine in Eglinton where the makeup isn't as diverse as it is in the rest of Toronto? Are you going to require employers to meet the makeup of some of the other ridings in the area, such as Fork York, for instance, which might have a very different makeup than my particular area?

I'd like to see some more details about what the particular geographic area is going to constitute and how they're going to determine the composition of the working-age population. Some of these questions are yet to be answered.

1700

One area of concern is that it's up to this Employment Equity Commission and the Employment Equity Commissioner to determine whether an employer has made reasonable progress towards fulfilling the goals set out in the plan, but we don't have any specific idea of what that is. For instance, there are no time lines or time frames in the legislation or in the regulations to tell us in what time frame the commission has to report. There are no definitions of what reasonable progress is. In other words, it's a very subjective matter.

I'd like to take a look at another element of Bill 79, and that's the employee participation. One of the most

contentious aspects of the legislation is the unabashed bias towards organized labour. If you look at the regulations, what they do is require that bargaining agents and employers are jointly responsible for the development and implementation of employment equity plans in the workforce. In fact, section 3 of the regulations goes so far as to provide that any reference to employer in the act shall be deemed to be a reference to the employer and the bargaining agent. However, it's unlikely that the bargaining agent would be jointly responsible for any penalties for non-compliance.

There are many areas of concern with respect to these particular provisions. For example, they allow for encroachment by trade unions on traditional areas of employer responsibility. If you look at hiring, training, workforce management and organization and hours of work, these ultimately have been the employer responsibility. Now there is the possibility of encroachment by the trade unions on these traditional areas of employer responsibility.

As well, an employment equity plan must be approved by the bargaining agent. Now, this could drag employers into a negotiation with the bargaining agent, possibly delaying or impeding the employer's ability to fulfil its other responsibilities under the legislation, and it could possibly complicate labour-management relations.

One of the other concerns—and actually this isn't a concern I'm raising for the first time—is that I was not too long ago at an event sponsored by the Canadian Council of Muslim Women and I had the privilege of hearing the new Employment Equity Commissioner, Juanita Westmoreland-Traoré, give a speech on the issue. She made a number of very valid points in the legislation, but one of the things she felt most strongly about was the issue of seniority and how in fact this can be a major barrier to employment equity. In fact, I think you would agree with me that one of the unions' main tenets, one of the unions' main platforms, one of the things they certainly work hardest on to protect their membership, is the whole area of seniority.

On the one hand, I see this involvement by the bargaining agent, to the extent that they have to approve the plan, as being counterproductive to the goal of employment equity. I think there is a real possibility, a very real possibility, of conflict in this area, and as I mentioned earlier, it was pointed out by the Employment Equity Commissioner herself, so she's certainly aware of that particular problem.

If you look at a workplace which is represented by more than one bargaining agent, the union may well require that the same requirements be imposed in all the locations. This may conflict with the intention of the regulations, which is that you ensure that the workplace reflect the composition of the surrounding geographic area. So that is a concern.

Unions are given approval rights at every single step of the process set out in the regulations, and in the event of a deadlock between an employer and a union, the matter is going to be referred to the commission. This could be very costly and very time-consuming, particularly, as I mentioned before, because there are no time frames for the resolution of these matters or the mediation process set out in the regulation or the legislation.

If you look at non-unionized workplaces, there is very little involvement for workers, and in fact it's a marked contrast between what has been provided in the unionized workplace with giving the bargaining agent so much power. We've gone to the other end of the scale with the non-unionized workplace. They merely provide that employers must establish a process for consulting with underrepresented employees, but in contrast to the union provisions, they don't have any role or responsibility in the development and implementation of the employment equity plans. So that is certainly a concern that we have.

One of the biggest issues and concerns I have with this particular piece of legislation is that it's in isolation, that it doesn't deal with education, with training and other related measures which I feel really open up access to the workforce.

If I specifically speak to women in this regard, I think we're making enormous strides over recent years. If you look at the women at university level courses, in post-graduate courses, the numbers are up astronomically over the last decade. There's been a marked improvement. I would submit to you, Mr Speaker, that education and training are the real ways in which we are going to provide equal employment opportunity to the people of this province.

As I mentioned, I was going to specifically speak to women in this regard, but I think women have made those enormous strides. We are finding every year that we are advancing that cause and that we are getting promotions, that we are getting hired for jobs that traditionally have gone only to our male counterparts. So I believe very strongly that the government's initiative was actually in isolation, without dealing with a comprehensive program for education and training.

The government, I believe, has completely failed to move forward with the report on access to trades and professions, and if you look at that particular report, there was something that was quoted by my colleague Alvin Curling, the member for Scarborough North, when he spoke in the House yesterday. I'm just going to repeat a very small section of what he said, because I think it's very important members for the House listen to this: He said that in the report of the Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades in Ontario there was a submission made by the Ontario Human Rights Commission:

"It is the public policy of the government to provide

all persons in Ontario with equal rights and opportunities and to facilitate their full contribution to life in Ontario. The right to equal opportunity must be balanced against the right of members of our society to be confident that the services they receive, particularly in matters which involve their physical wellbeing, are rendered by qualified and capable individuals."

That was the Human Rights Commission that was speaking when it submitted to the Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades in Ontario. That brings up another point I wish to make, and that's the duplication in having an employment equity commissioner and a human rights commissioner, when the Human Rights Commission is actually empowered to look at equity in employment.

There was an estimate by the minister, I believe, over a year ago when she was asked what this Employment Equity Commission was going to cost, and I believe she said somewhere in the vicinity of \$25 million to \$31 million. That's what she was quoted as saying, and that was on February 7, 1991, on Global Television.

Subsequent to that, at the news conference given in June of this year, the minister could not estimate the cost of implementing the legislation. But I would submit to you, if the minister's estimates originally established \$25 million to \$31 million to establish what she called an effective Employment Equity Commission, then wouldn't it be better to put some of that money into making our Human Right Commission more effective, into clearing up the backlog and into having one unit take a look at employment equity?

We are creating a separate bureaucracy. We are going to duplicate the process, and what is the minister going to do? Take out of the mandate of the Human Rights Commission to look at employment equity matters? If you get a decision by the Employment Equity Commission that you don't like, are you then entitled to appeal it to the Human Rights Commission or vice-versa?

I'm very uncomfortable with the fact that we have a new bureaucracy set up, when I haven't been satisfied that the existing bureaucracy, if it were made to be effective, if some of that \$25 million to \$31 million were put into it, whether that couldn't be the answer. To date, I haven't had any ideas to the contrary given to me that there is a need for a separate Employment Equity Commission.

1710

So I'm not only concerned about duplication of reporting. I'm concerned about the cost, the cost of both the commission that will be set up and the cost to employers. If you look at the commission, the powers are quite far-reaching, but they're very subjective in the decision-making authority, so it's difficult to predict how this body is actually going to react in the future. I can tell you that many employers are very concerned about the wide-ranging powers granted to the commis-

sion and about the vagueness of many of the regulations, such as self-identification, which employers will be required to fill.

One of the issues I touched on when I quoted the Human Rights Commission saying "particularly in matters which involve their physical wellbeing, are rendered by qualified and capable individuals" is that of merit. I happen to think that merit is extremely important, that we want to attract the brightest and the best to do a job. What you want to do, instead of discouraging the brightest and the best by putting people who aren't as qualified ahead of them, is to ensure that there aren't systemic barriers.

But two of the methods I suggested which would help, education and training, are two where there has been very little information given. When we look at the issue of merit, when we look at the issue of employment equity, we perhaps should revisit some of our long-held notions about employment equity and where we are today.

I mentioned the fact, specifically related to women, that I thought we had made very major strides in the workforce. I think that is also true of visible minorities. There are obviously cases where there is still discrimination and there are still cases that should and must be brought before the Human Rights Commission. But I read in June an article by Richard Gwyn. I don't always agree with Richard Gwyn, who writes for the *Toronto Star*, but he really gave me a lot to think about in his June 23 article in the *Toronto Star*. He made the case that he thinks the employment equity bill actually entrenches race consciousness. And then he asked the question:

"Are Lebanese, Armenians, Iranians, Jews indeed, 'visible' or invisible? How 'native' does a person have to be—one half? One sixteenth? Should 'disability' really include, as the Canadian Human Rights Commission has ruled, the wearing of glasses?"

Some might think: "Well, this is carrying it to the nth degree. We know what disability is. We know what a visible minority is." But I tell you, the way this legislation is set up, there are a lot of questions that Mr Gwyn points to that have not been answered.

Mr Gwyn also gives some interesting statistics. He says: "Across Canada, the male unemployment rate is now 11.8%. The female rate is 10.9%. Among young men...the disparity in contrast to their female job rivals is a whopping 20.5% to 15.7%."

So he's making the point in the case of women that while, as he does point out in his article, there are still problems, there are still barriers, he feels we haven't taken a good look at our employment equity and what it's to achieve. He says we should be looking at employment statistics now and seeing whether in fact women are employed, whether there are barriers there.

He says, "The fallback argument is that those men with jobs nevertheless have most of the good jobs." He says this is "true-ish." That's his word, not mine. "But not for much longer. A majority of university students are now women, and the gender gap there keeps widening. Anyway, tell that to Kim Campbell."

Then he goes on to say: "According to studies by the Economic Council of Canada in 1991 and 1992, immigrants (most now from the Third World) have higher earnings rates and lower unemployment rates than native-born Canadians (most of them of European origin). More to the point, the studies found no evidence of pay discrimination against immigrants of colour."

So Mr Gwyn's submission is that we're looking at ourselves in a rearview mirror, we're looking at what things were like 10 years ago, and that we really haven't revisited the 1990s to see whether we're truly as discriminatory as Bill 79 would have us believe. He made the point that to criticize employment equity in the past has been to be sexist, to be racist, to be a dinosaur.

"Back then, much of this was justified: Stereotypes did need to be smashed and role models created. Since then, most Canadian dinosaurs have become extinct.

"Economic change is the principal cause. The heaviest job losses have been in the traditional male occupations—forestry, mining, heavy industry. The principal job growth has been in self-employment—personal services, stores and restaurants—where women and visible minorities are most active.

He also brings out the point about seniority. He said:

"Mostly, they've still got"—he's talking about the larger institutions and the laggard institutions—"too many white men in suits because another equity rule requires them to respect seniority.

"The specific employment equities are long overdue to be addressed.

"But it's also time overdue for us to stop looking at that rearview mirror."

He concludes:

"We have a chance to become a true distinct society, the first country in the world not to need a clumsy and expensive, and far, far worse, a socially divisive employment equity law because that society is already becoming irreversibly equitable. In short, let's take the dare on us behaving like Canadians—not like Bosnians."

Now, that is one viewpoint, but I suspect it's a viewpoint that is shared by many people. This legislation presumes that we are as inequitable in 1993 as we were in 1983. I would be the last one to say that there are not inequities left out there. There certainly are inequities. There are still inequities with regard to pay equity. There are inequities in certain workplaces as far

as discrimination is concerned. But I think the biggest thing to change this is an attitude change, not weak-toothed legislation that only alienates business that much more but really does not solve the problem.

Can't we as a Legislature say that we should take a look at issues such as employment equity and make sure that we are not setting up another costly, interfering, bureaucratic system when other solutions may be the way we should go? I for one believe that attitude changes can be profound.

I will point to only two examples. One is drinking and driving. It used to be the macho thing to do 15 or 20 years ago, to have a few drinks and get into a car. Yet today, we look at all sectors of society, from our senior citizens right down to our young people, and they not only know but are firmly committed to the fact that drinking cannot be and must not be mixed with driving. That was an attitude change that 15 years ago you would say was impossible, but it was a concerted government effort that actually changed people's minds and people's attitudes.

I'll point to a second example, and that's violence against women. I think we've made tremendous inroads in bringing it to the public's attention. Slowly but surely those attitudes are changing, so that every member of this Legislature now firmly believes that violence towards women is never condoned and is never acceptable.

That's what I would do. That's what I as an individual would do with employment equity: I would work with people, I would educate people, I would train people, not give weak-toothed legislation that can't be enforced. I don't think Bill 79 is the way. It's unfortunate. The intent is very positive, but I don't think this is going to do the job.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I thank the honourable member for Eglinton for her contribution to this debate and invite any questions and/or comments.
1720

Hon Elaine Ziemba (Minister of Citizenship and Minister Responsible for Human Rights, Disability Issues, Seniors' Issues and Race Relations): I listened with great interest to the member opposite, the woman who is critic for women's issues. I was a little bit concerned about some of her perceptions of what has been happening in the labour force and the workforce.

You talked about the bank in your local area. Yes, banks have started to hire people with disabilities, they've started to hire people who are visible minorities and representatives of visible minorities. They've always hired women at the front, low-end jobs. That has always been a woman's role in a bank. But why have banks started to hire different people into the workplace? Because of the federal legislation.

There had to be federal legislation to make sure that

banks did start to reflect the communities they were representing. However, now that banks have started to hire people who represent their communities, they have realized that this is good economic business sense, that it has helped their business in the community and it has helped them encourage new customers.

I also want to just bring to the attention of the member opposite, the critic for women's issues as a matter of fact, that in the latest statistics we have, women in the paid labour force are generally concentrated only in 10 occupations. The statistics show us that 41% of women are in the jobs of secretary, sales clerk, bookkeeper, cashier, nurse, food and beverage server, elementary or kindergarten teacher, office clerk, data processing operator and receptionist. This contrasts with 21% of men in the same occupations.

The wage gap between the average woman's and the average man's earnings is still a very large wage gap. Things have not changed that dramatically. Women are still underrepresented in apprenticeship programs and female students are still only represented in 4.5% of the regulated apprenticeship programs.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon Ms Ziemba: Thank you very much. I was just getting going.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, I'd be delighted to move unanimous consent to have the minister make a statement on this if she wishes to carry on with her speech.

I would like to congratulate the member for Eglinton for giving some very positive thoughts to this whole issue. It might seem to some on the surface strange that Liberals would talk against something called employment equity, because employment equity was initiated by the former Liberal government. In fact the Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades study, which was completed by our government, is something that really started the ball rolling. So I think members opposite should realize that when they hear the member for Scarborough North and the member for Eglinton say they can't support this bill, there must be some rather intriguing reasons.

It had something to do, I think, with the points that have been pointed out, that this government has taken a philosophical approach to try to solve an issue and as usual has bungled it. They've set it up so that it's going to become bureaucratic, so that it's going to become extremely expensive, so that indeed it will do the opposite of what it's intended to do.

One of the most interesting comments the member for Eglinton made was that we need to create equitable opportunity for employment. What I have said for some time is that what we're leading towards with this government, with the mismanagement of the economy and with the bureaucratic increases it's creating, is unemployment equity. Everybody's going to be out of

work.

You can come up with all of your pie-in-the-sky, wonderful, simple solutions, you can try to couch it under trying to help women when in fact what you need to do is create employment in this province, and then everybody can have an equal shot at it.

Mr Malkowski: I really find very disturbing some of the comments made by the member for Eglinton. There are two points that she raised. Employment equity legislation focusing only on hiring unqualified people? Did she say something like that? Did she say something about hiring only qualified and bright people? Is that really what the intention of her comments was regarding disabled people, racial minorities, aboriginal people, women, that in fact those groups are not bright? I'm shocked at that comment. Is she in fact not bright herself?

The point that I'm making is access, accessibility to every person to have access to employment so that we can look at these different groups.

Mr Mahoney: Don't be misleading the House over there.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Mississauga West.

Mr Malkowski: You mean to say that you're not encouraging this? I'm concerned about this and your second point. I'm talking about the duplication of services.

Discrimination does happen in the workplace. The Ontario Human Rights Commission is way behind in its case load. That occurred under the Liberal government. It was their responsibility because they did nothing about this human rights issue. They left many, many cases back on the back burner, and many people had terrible experiences and that government did nothing about it.

That's why they became angry and voted us in, because they didn't want to see that happen again. They wanted to see the Human Rights Commission reformed. They wanted to see legislation that would be introduced to address this issue, and that's the action we've taken.

Your words are baloney. You've talked about employment equity, but you've done nothing. We've introduced legislation to that effect. We've taken action. That's what we've done here. That is our philosophy, to change this, and that's why we're here.

The Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The member for Waterloo North.

Mrs Witmer: I'd like to compliment the member on her comments. I think she's raised some very valid concerns regarding the legislation and made some very significant other points as well.

I think the point I'd like to add as well is that we need to develop an economy where equal opportunity is

going to be achieved by growth and new educational opportunities are going to be provided that are going to give the unemployed and those who are disadvantaged the training that they need to compete for jobs in the new high-tech industries of the future. What we're talking about is equal opportunity for everybody in this province, and in order to do that we need to first of all concentrate on creating jobs for those individuals.

Again, I'd like to congratulate the member on her comments.

The Speaker: The member for Eglinton has up to two minutes for her reply.

Ms Poole: I thank the various members for their comments in this debate. First of all, I am very disappointed in the unfortunate words of the member for York East, who I believe has deliberately misconstrued what I said. I at no time made any reference to the fact that women and minorities and aboriginal people and the disadvantaged and people with disabilities are not qualified.

In fact I very firmly believe that when they have the benefits of education and training, when they have other benefits that I think it's important for us to provide, they are not only on an equal footing, they can surpass your expectations or anyone's expectations. I think people who have suffered disadvantage in the past are much more liable to try much harder than people who have been advantaged, and with their basic abilities they can compete and they can be the most qualified individuals. I think that's important to say.

With reference to the remarks by the minister when she was referring to the low-end jobs in the bank, I suspect that she hasn't looked around her to see what the banks are doing with the high-end jobs, and I was referring to those. Look at what the Bank of Montreal is doing. Look at their own so-called employment equity, not legislated but what they are doing to promote women within the ranks and to provide them with very good jobs. I think you'll see, Minister, that your comments actually mentioned the fact that changes are already happening, without your legislation.

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): No. With federal legislation.

Ms Poole: Well, the federal legislation is there. It is providing those changes. But I'll tell you, changes in attitude are what's going to make the difference, not weak legislation such as Bill 79. It is not cutting the mustard.

The Speaker: Is there further debate on this bill?

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): It's interesting to hear the last speaker describe this legislation as weak legislation—I think that's what she just said—which makes us wonder where the Liberal Party is coming from in respect to a position on this legislation. We've heard there are some divisions within their

caucus, and perhaps they're based on the fact that this legislation doesn't go far enough. I know there are certainly some members who have expressed concerns about the legislation, and the member just described this legislation as weak legislation.

I want to say we in the Conservative caucus would not describe it as weak legislation and certainly members of our caucus, a significant number, wish to participate in this debate. They feel very strongly about the legislation and its impact on Ontarians, the economy of Ontario and a lot of young people who are having their hopes, dreams and aspirations shattered by this kind of intervention on the part of the government of Ontario.

1730

I'll say that almost on a weekly basis I'm talking to young people, young white males, their parents, people who are frustrated, angry, depressed and disillusioned because of their inability to find work and the fact that so many doors are being slammed in their faces with this sort of initiative, where in effect the government is legislating discrimination. That's what in effect they're doing: introducing quotas, legislating discrimination—officially sanctioned, mandatory discrimination, that's what this legislation is.

What it does is to shut out a generation or more of young people in this province who have spent many hours achieving an education, working hard to be successful in life, and now they're being told by an NDP interventionist government: "No, we're sorry, you don't have a future in this province. The reality is that most of those doors are going to be closed to you because of the quotas that we are imposing on the job force in this province." That's the reality, whether the government wants to accept it or not.

I want to say that there's a lot of concern about this social engineering on the part of social democrats and that it's not only related to young white males, their parents, their grandparents and their great-grandparents, but also in respect to the divisions it's going to create within the communities within this province, the concerns about fair play and the fact that all of our citizens are not going to be entitled to equal rights without discrimination. In fact, what this legislation says is that some citizens have more rights because of gender and colour. Some are more equal than others.

Currently, the reality in the workforce is that the candidate most suitable or most qualified for the position is going to be selected. What the government is suggesting or indicating or mandating by this legislation is an additional consideration which is paramount in respect to these decisions being made by private sector employers. That paramount consideration will be, is this candidate, is this applicant for the job or for promotion a member of a designated group, one of the designated groups laid down by the government? If not, that

employer will in all likelihood be forced to hire a less qualified individual. That could frequently be the case: A less qualified individual will be the successful candidate because the government is saying that individuals selected for promotion or hiring have to be from this designated group.

The government is talking about firms with more than 50 employees drawing up employment equity plans with goals and timetables for ensuring representation of the designated groups. Again, we've said these are hiring quotas, reverse discrimination which is going to create difficulties.

I want to talk about the impact on business. We've certainly seen the business community, business commentators making reference to this legislation and its impact on the business community. We're now in, as we all know, a period of economic depression. We have the government bringing in legislation to try and reduce its expenditures; we have the private sector reducing dramatically throughout the province; we have a significant number of unemployed in this province, a record number of people receiving social assistance, and at this time in our history, this interventionist government decides that this is an appropriate time to bring in yet another bureaucratic requirement of the private sector. It really boggles the mind.

What we're saying to these people is, "If you come into Ontario, if you want to expand in Ontario, if you simply want to exist in Ontario, you've got to forget about hiring and promoting the most qualified candidates." That, in essence, is the message that's being delivered. To investors, people who might look at putting their money into this province, the message out there is, "Investors beware." This kind of interventionist legislation, where the government or some government inspector, some equity policeman, is going to be looking over your shoulder, looking at your books, approving your every move, this is the sort of initiative I guess we should have expected from a socialist government.

One of the members over there said that they were elected because they were expected to impose this kind of legislation on the people of Ontario. Well, I don't think they were elected for that reason. They were elected by a fluke. As someone said, "If the election had been held a day later, they would have been thrown out again." The fact is that in reality we do indeed get the government we deserve, and I guess we deserve this bunch of characters. Is that unparliamentary? I'll withdraw it, Mr Speaker.

But it's unfortunate, because we've seen these kinds of initiatives, this kind of intervention, this kind of intrusion in our everyday lives, which is chasing away investment and profitability in this province. As we see, we're losing jobs at a record rate. We're seeing people forced into poverty situations with little hope for the future. This government is doing virtually nothing but

making it an even more difficult situation for all Ontarians.

We simply have to look at Bill 40. What kind of message did Bill 40 send out to investors and employers in this province?

We look at record tax increases, a \$2-billion record tax grab by this government in its last budget, and a deficit, on a regular basis, of \$10 billion. We're looking at something exceeding \$10 billion, probably, this year and we're supposed to be happy with a \$10-billion deficit. That's the kind of signal that goes out to investors. They say: "That \$10-billion deficit on an annual basis means further increases in taxes in the future. We have to pay for this." That's another message that's being sent out to investors.

Hydro rates have gone through the roof, and we find out today that Hydro is operating at a significant deficit again. In all likelihood, we can look at further rate increases for Hydro.

I can go on. All of these things combined tend to send out nothing but negative messages to people who want to grow and prosper and invest in this province. That's a reality. That's what we have to live with in this province now, this ramshackle gang who don't have a clue where they're going, imposing this kind of social engineering on the people of the province of Ontario, and we're going to pay for it for decades to come.

The young generations of people have no real future ahead of them because of this government, very unfortunate people coming up through the system right now who can look ahead, and it's pretty bleak, it's pretty bleak when they look at the job opportunities, the career opportunities.

Can they match what their parents have had in their lives? What can they look forward to? They can look forward to this government and its raft of inspectors. Talk about growth of government. They've already hired a whole new raft of tax inspectors to try to collect their taxes. Now, we're going to hire a whole new raft of police officers probably. Quota policemen, employment quota cops, will be running around this province, paid at exorbitant wages, probably all former NDP hacks, going through private sector books and businesses, trying to find out where they break the law and then charging them, dragging them through the court systems where they can face fines up to \$50,000.

That's another reality, a pretty picture for the province and for people trying to do business, trying to make a buck, trying to support their families, trying to provide employment. That's the reality of today's NDP socialist Ontario: a black, black, bleak, bleak picture. They should be ashamed of it, but they haven't got the brains to be ashamed of it. They lack grey matter.

Mr Malkowski: On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: What do you mean by "black, black, black"?

Is there some of kind of racial overtones to this?

The Speaker: The member does not have a point of order. I invite the member for Leeds-Grenville to continue.

Mr Runciman: That's the kind of inane self-righteousness I will simply ignore, but it's commonplace from that gang over there; "that rabble" is a more appropriate description.

The Speaker: The member for Leeds-Grenville will know that it might assist him in delivering his speech if he's not tempted to use remarks that would show disrespect for other members of the House.

1740

Mr Runciman: You're right, Mr Speaker. I apologize. I do get worked up about this particular legislation and many of the initiatives being undertaken by this government simply because, whether they want to believe it or not, I'm personally very much concerned about where we're going and what the future is for so many people. I can relate it to my own family, nephews of mine and their parents, their grandparents, who have expressed their concern to me personally about the lack of opportunities in this province. As I said, the future looks very bleak indeed.

These members can get up and express concerns about me using a term like "a black, bleak future" and suggest there's something hideous or some hidden message in that. That's the sort of thing that offends most commonsense, thinking Ontarians, when the people who try to intimidate you if you're not exactly politically correct—that is the way the NDP has always operated. If you try to express concern about something they're doing or something they're proposing, something they're trying to initiate, if you express concern and use some kind of terminology which has been used for many years and has no negative connotations, they will try to intimidate you by getting up and charging you with something, whether there's some racist implication—those kinds of things I resent and I think most people of this province resent. We're sick and tired of that sort of reaction and treatment by the NDP and their colleagues.

Interjection.

Mr Runciman: Oh, I've talked about investors.

I want to talk about reverse discrimination. There are a lot of people, and I hear this as well, who are very concerned about what this kind of legislation is going to do. Ontario is a pretty darn good place to live in. Ontarians, by and large, are fair people who can live together and live well together regardless of their race, colour, their origins, their handicaps, what have you. That's been my experience. We've had a few problems, but if you compare us to other jurisdictions we've done pretty well. We get along pretty well. We see changes taking place in society on a voluntary basis.

I went to the theatre the other night and was watching the advertisements before the feature film where a whole new presentation in terms of minorities, visible minorities, was being used in the advertisements prior to the feature film. That's the sort of thing that's happening as really a recognition by the private sector of the changing society in Ontario. We can get along well together. This is not being force-fed to the private sector. They're adapting, and they're adapting with some encouragement, but they do not need, they do not require—in fact, it's the wrongheaded way to go—the heavy hand of government. That in effect is what this Bill 79 represents: the heavy hand of government.

I've talked about fairminded Ontarians. The good climate in terms of relations between all sorts of different races and cultures in this province is, in my view and the view of many, many others, going to be jeopardized by this kind of legislation. This is the sort of thing that starts to drive wedges between people, and peoples and cultures.

What happens is that you get a fellow, a young, white male, who has gone to a community college to train for a job on a firefighting force, or he's gone to community college or to university taking a criminology course and wants to be a police officer. We can go through a whole range of areas where these people have devoted many, many hours, their parents have worked hard to come up with enough dollars to get them adequate formal education so they can have a future, an opportunity in this province, and now they're going to find that those doors are shut to them in many cases because these bodies, whether it's the private sector or the public sector, are not going to be able to hire or promote on the basis of merit. They're not going to be able to hire or promote on the basis of the most qualified individual. They're going to have to hire and promote on the basis of guidelines and mandatory requirements laid down by this socialist, interventionist government.

What happens to these people? The resentment builds, it festers, and feelings that were not there in this province in the generations we were growing up with are going to grow and are going to fester. When the young people start seeing a visible minority or someone who has significantly less qualifications than them fill positions they've worked for and their parents have paid for in terms of gaining a formal education experience and what have you, the resentment is going to come to a boil. We're going to have those kinds of problems cropping up in this province. They were not there before, but this government is fostering them. That's what you're going to do. You're fostering them by this kind of interventionist legislation saying: "Qualifications don't count. Merit doesn't count. What counts is gender, colour and a host of other areas." That's the reality.

I want to read you a quote from Howard Levitt, who is a Toronto-based employment lawyer and author of

The Law of Dismissal in Canada. I'll quote:

"The theory behind the new act is that these four groups, because of presumed discrimination from birth, cannot succeed on their own merits. An assumption will often be made that a woman or a member of a visible minority only obtained a position because of this legislation rather than on merit. They will then never receive the respect they deserve. The government of Ontario should be promoting a gender- and colour-blind society rather than pitting people against each other on precisely those grounds"—pitting people against each other. "The tragedy is that this proposed act will make racism and sexism the law in Ontario."

I don't believe this gentleman has any political axe to grind. He's an employment lawyer and an author and has obviously, like many people in Ontario, taken a look at this legislation and is extremely concerned about its impact and the implications.

The previous speaker talked about the Toronto Star columnist Richard Gwyn, and I thought his column was excellent as well. It was entitled, "Job Equity as Seen Through a Rearview Mirror." Gwyn as well raised the spectre of significant divisions in the community of Ontario, "a backlash among young men as they experience reverse discrimination."

I think that is a real concern, one which this government doesn't seem to want to deal with. Gwyn suggested that the implementation of this legislation was idiotic. I think that's an apt description of this government's actions, idiotic indeed, given, if nothing else, the state of the economy in this province, the number of unemployed, the number of people depending on social assistance, the number of people who have truly given up hope for any real opportunity in this province in their foreseeable futures.

Again I want to say it is a mandatory system of officially sanctioned discrimination, which certainly the Conservative Party cannot support.

I want to quote someone else who rarely gets quoted in this Legislature, but I think frequently he is dead on. He has some credentials, I suppose, in the fact that he belongs to a minority in some respects, a minority that has throughout history and throughout the world been the recipient of significant discrimination, and that's the Jewish community. This columnist is Lorrie Goldstein in the Toronto Sun, who has some interesting comments in respect to this legislation, and I'm going to put them on the record.

"Pretty soon, coming to most workplaces near you, will be a survey asking workers to 'voluntarily' define themselves by race, gender, disability, aboriginal status. The results may be confidential, but they will not be anonymous.

"Imagine. Workers in this province, by law, are going to be categorized by race and gender. Incredible. Then

again, many other countries have defined their citizens in this way in the past. Why, South Africa springs immediately to mind.

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"Still, it was amusing to see Ziemba, of all people, introducing these 'employment equity' regulations which are ostensibly designed to combat discrimination in the workplace. Just last month a beaming Ziemba and federal Multiculturalism Minister Gerry Weiner presented an ethnic journalists' award and provincial and federal citations to one Arnold A. Auguste.

"Auguste is the publisher of *Share*," a large ethnic newspaper. "Its ongoing campaign against the staging of the musical *Show Boat* has provided a forum for some of the most anti-Semitic drivel seen in the public prints in this city since the 1940s, when it was considered acceptable....

"Anyway, Elaine Ziemba and Gerry Weiner just gave this guy their seal of approval. One is left speechless by the ironies on so many levels. Then again, perhaps it's all appropriate.

"After all, today, the same quotas that were once used to keep Jews, blacks and other 'undesirables' out of the workplace may now be used to keep whites and particularly white males out of the workplace. Of course we don't call them quotas any more because that would be wrong. Now we call them 'goals and timetables' because that is politically correct.

"And you know all about those nasty, all-powerful, male chauvinist pig, brutes eh? Those thousands of working-class stiffies who have been losing jobs or who can't find work along with everyone else, in the worst recession since the Dirty '30s?

"Well, they've had it all their way for too long, folks. Now they're going to pay through a new regime which will never achieve what it claims—hiring people based on merit."

All I can say to that is amen. Goldstein is dead on in respect to this matter.

I can't express our own concerns. I think they will be echoed by other members of our caucus in the days to come in the debate on this, because we consider this legislation perhaps one of the most significant pieces of legislation that we have to deal with in this Parliament in terms of the harm it's going to do to this province, in terms of the harm it's going to do to the economy, in terms of the prospect of getting out of the doldrums that we are currently in in respect to economic growth and, more importantly, when we talk about economic growth, we talk about job creation.

That of course is the major concern, creating jobs and what this government again does, as I said earlier, is send out the message: Investors beware. Stay away from Ontario. There's a growing pile, with the continuation of this government, of messages saying to investors:

Beware of this province. Stay out of Ontario, for a whole range of reasons that I talked about before, taxes, debt, deficit, hydro rates, etc, ad nauseam.

Of course the other element that I've been stressing is the fact that for so many people that I talk to there's a growing sense of distress, of disillusionment, of wondering about our future, where we're going to go, what job opportunities we are going to have when we get out of school, what job opportunities are out there for many in their early twenties right now, young, white males who can't apply—who can apply but simply are not going to have an opportunity to be selected because they don't fit into one of the designated groups.

I want to say in concluding in the next few minutes that, again, this is something that we find terribly offensive. We don't believe it's in the best interests of Ontarians. It's something that's going to come back to haunt all of us in the next few years.

We have to live with this government for, I think, if it takes its mandate to the extreme, another couple of years. They probably will because there's virtually no likelihood, certainly it's the sense of everyone at this stage that they cannot be re-elected, but I don't want to say that, in essence, because I don't think it's an appropriate thing to say.

I think there's a strong feeling that's the case, but the problem with that is that they do have a majority government, they do have two years if they take their mandate to its full limit, and they can do additional significant harm to this province beyond what they have already done.

Interjections.

Mr Runciman: They're still dreaming in Technicolor, as we hear from the comments coming across the aisle. But I guess the only way they can continue to show up here with smiles on their faces is to dream in Technicolor and to pretend that pieces of legislation like this are in the best interests of Ontarians. We know they're not. We know that in fact they're harmful.

They're going to do untold harm to all of us in this province, but especially young people coming up through the educational system, who are out now drawing unemployment insurance or on the social welfare rolls, who simply can't find opportunities out there because of these kinds of imposed quotas by the government: a mandatory system of officially sanctioned discrimination against young, white males, quotas, reverse discrimination, all of the things we find terribly offensive.

I want to end with a quote from a *Globe and Mail* editorial dealing with this issue as well. I think it really sums things up right on:

"Whatever words you use, the truth is that henceforth decisions on hiring and promotion throughout Ontario will be driven by the employer's need to meet the quota

and not by the merits of the individuals concerned. In the name of fighting discrimination, this bill institutionalizes it. In the guise of eliminating race and sex as factors in social and economic advancement, it portends a society wholly obsessed with such distinctions. What a terrible, monstrous mistake."

The other comments by Mr Goldstein certainly sum up my views, and I suspect the views of many of my colleagues in the Progressive Conservative Party. We're very distressed about this legislation and very concerned about its implications for Ontario, for the opportunities for jobs, the growth in the economy and really the long-term best interests of every resident of this province.

The Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Leeds-Grenville for his contribution to the debate and invite questions and/or comments. The member for York East.

Mr Malkowski: Sitting here listening very carefully and having to patiently endure this speech from the member for Leeds-Grenville and those comments, I must say the extreme overtones of not only fear-mongering but intimidation and what I can only call misleading the public as to the intent of the legislation, in saying that somehow it's scaring white males, this is really unacceptable. I hope you would correct this misleading fearmongering. Employment equity legislation is not going to stop white, young males from entering the workforce.

Another point I'd like to make is, I'm very proud of my white, young male son, and my other children, and I'm not worried at all about their future or their chances when they apply for jobs. I'm not worried at all. Your comments about unqualified people being hired, do you really believe that? Do you think disabled people or women or visible minorities or aboriginal people are unqualified? Is that what you're intending in your speech? How amazing. Your comments really bother me. Quite frankly, they're unacceptable, they're misleading, and I hope you would set the record straight.

Employment equity is designed to promote—

The Speaker: To the member for York East: He really should not suggest that another member of the House is misleading.

Mr Malkowski: I think it's important to clarify. I think it's important for the public to understand the real intent of employment equity. It's not going to stop white, young males from applying and entering the workforce. I want to be very clear about that and I want to correct the misunderstanding from the member for Leeds-Grenville. That's my point. Employment equity is there to help people and to raise the opportunities for people to have a real, fair opportunity to get that chance to participate.

The Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? We have time for one more today. The member for

Etobicoke West.

Mr Stockwell: Once again the member for Leeds-Grenville has brought forward some concerns with respect to this piece of legislation. He's brought forward documentation, experts from the field, in their comments with respect to this legislation.

1800

Hon Ms Ziemba: The Toronto Sun? Documentation? The Sun is documentation?

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Stockwell: Mr Speaker, he's brought forward—in the quotes from the newspapers, he quoted from a lawyer who handles these kinds of litigations and has written books on the subject. He commented on the fact that it's going to be regressive legislation. In typical fashion, the NDP offers no alternatives. All they do is have a member stand up and yell "fearmongering, intimidating, scaring," etc. Not one of the concerns that were brought forward by the member for Leeds-Grenville was dealt with in this specific member's response. He did suggest—this is his suggestion—that all people who are disabled etc are unqualified. If that's what he got out of the conversation, then clearly he wasn't listening. The point that was made was that the member said it's the qualifications that are excluding specific people in our society.

It's not based on qualification; it's based on quota. It hasn't worked in the United States. Jurisdiction after jurisdiction has proven categorically that it doesn't work, and the best this government comes up with is typical socialist defence, "fearmongering, intimidating, scaring." When there isn't a debate, they name-call.

The Speaker: Since it's 6 of the clock and we must leave this debate on Bill 79. When we next resume the debate on Bill 79, there will be an opportunity for two more members of the House to address questions and comments and for the member for Leeds-Grenville to respond to those comments.

Did the member have a point of order?

Mr Runciman: I'm not sure. I was asking for unanimous consent to complete it so that we don't have to do it on a further day, that's all, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: If there is unanimous consent to forgo the two remaining questions and comments and the response by the member for Leeds-Grenville, then it's perfectly in order. Is there unanimous consent for that? Agreed.

It being 6 of the clock, and pursuant to standing order 34—

Mr Runciman: I thought everybody agreed.

The Speaker: Sorry?

Mr Stockwell: We agreed to finish the rotation.

The Speaker: Oh, I see. I thought they meant to forgo it. Okay, I'm sorry, my misunderstanding. All

right. I will recognize the member for Guelph.

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): I was listening very closely to what the member was saying about young white males and fearmongering that was going on and how people are not going to be hired. When I look at the legislation and I look at the number of years and the number of people who have missed out on employment opportunities, not because it was someone who wanted to discriminate, but because of the barriers that are in place—the barriers that are in place, as my friend Mr Malkowski was saying, that he couldn't have the equipment to perform the job—that's what employment equity is trying to replace.

Interjection: It's systemic discrimination.

Mr Fletcher: It's systemic discrimination. It's systemic discrimination that is going on in the workplace.

It has absolutely nothing to do, and I have a problem trying to fathom where the opposition is coming from, with reverse discrimination. What this is trying to do is actually reverse the discrimination that is going on in the workplace now, not to reverse what is happening to young white males.

Where does it say, where is it written, that only minorities and only disabled people use the Human Rights Commission to get employment? Where does it say that is an option that is only open to certain people but not open to white people? That is something that is put in place for every citizen of Ontario, and every citizen of Ontario should use it.

One of the biggest barriers to employment equity, one of the biggest barriers, is the mind, the human mind. If we cannot open up our minds and allow people, people who are going to work hard, who can be utilized, then that is the biggest barrier to employment equity.

I question where the opposition is coming from when I hear some of the rhetoric that is going on as far as what employment equity is trying to do is concerned, and I think their minds are closed to what we are trying to do as a government.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I'm disturbed when I find in response to a very thoughtful presentation with respect to this bill that we get the member for York East getting up and speaking about a member misleading somebody. I didn't hear any retraction from him, and he used words like "fearmongering," "intimidation" and "scaring." This is absolutely ludicrous.

What we are doing in this debate is bringing forward the concerns of our constituents. If these people—and I see he's scuttling off. He doesn't want to take any notice of this. He didn't apologize.

The Speaker: The member for York Mills, it would be very helpful if first he would direct his comments to the Chair, and of course he wants to direct his comments to the speech made by the member for Leeds-

Grenville.

Mr Turnbull: Mr Speaker, I am dealing with the speech from the member for Leeds-Grenville. I heard an accusation from the member for York East that this was misleading. You brought it to his attention. He did not withdraw it. I have never been in this House and heard "misleading" put forward and the member has not been brought to attention that they've had to retract it. This is fundamentally wrong, Mr Speaker.

We have had innumerable constituents coming forward, and I don't believe for one minute that the members of the government have not had the same concerns expressed to them. These are legitimate concerns of our constituents of all political stripes. They are concerned that this will lead to discrimination against white males. This is our right to be able to present this, and I think the comments of the member for Leeds-Grenville were very much germane to this discussion.

The Speaker: The member for Leeds-Grenville has up to two minutes for his reply.

Mr Runciman: I think it was the member for York East who used that sort of language, and another member as well, with respect to categorizing my observations. In effect, I wouldn't describe it as trying to scare people; I'm trying to alert people to the implications of this legislation, and they can use whatever words they wish to.

The member for York East uses that sort of language, but I have genuine, legitimate concerns. I feel very strongly about this piece of legislation and its implications for Ontario, and its impact on especially the young people trying to get into the job market and looking forward to some kind of future, some kind of opportunity for them and their families in this province.

Those are legitimate concerns, and of course whenever we raise issues like this, which are legitimate issues, the NDP uses these sorts of tactics, language like this, to try to intimidate people so they do not engage in a meaningful productive debate.

Mr Stockwell: Exactly. NDP politics to a T.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Runciman: Instead, they use language like this.

The member for York East talks about not worrying about his own son. He's not getting the kind of feedback that the rest of us are getting, and that's going to grow with the passage of this legislation. Concern is going to grow. He may not be concerned about his own son because of the fact that this government hires virtually every relative of NDP members in any event. We just have to look through the phone book and it's packed with people named Ziemba, Charlton, Mackenzie and on and on and on, so I can understand that they don't have a concern. The rest of us do have concerns, legitimate ones, and not just about our rela-

tives, but about every single person growing up in this province today.

The Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 34, the question that this House adjourn is deemed to have been made. The member for York Mills had filed dissatisfaction with the reply to a question he asked of the Minister of Education and Training. The member for York Mills has up to five minutes to make his presentation and the minister has up to five minutes for his reply.

1810

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): On June 28, 1993, I raised my concern that Metro Toronto public school boards, which receive no provincial funding, are none the less being asked to achieve savings under the social contract.

My specific question to the minister was, "Will you commit that any savings achieved through the social contract will be rebated directly to the Metro property taxpayers?" The minister's response was, and I quote in part from his response, "The reason that the Metropolitan Toronto taxpayers get nothing in the way of grants from the provincial government is because they have a lot in the way of commercial and industrial wealth."

Therefore, by the minister's own admission, the money belongs to the property taxpayers of Metro and not to the province. Yet the minister refused to agree that any savings should be rebated directly to the Metropolitan property taxpayers.

As the Minister of Municipal Affairs said in this House on May 19, 1993, "Of course, the public school boards in Metro do not qualify for grants, and therefore you can't take back something which they are not receiving." That comment is at variance with the Premier's comments in this House on June 3, 1993: "There are very rich school boards and there are school boards that have a very low assessment base. There are discussions under way with those school boards about how a reconciliation can be effected which treats them fairly."

The Minister of Education and Training's response on June 28, 1993, was insufficient because it did not provide a direct answer to my question and did not address the inequity of Metro taxpayers being hit with a double tax grab. How can the government insist on receiving \$93 million from Metro school boards whose funding does not come from the province in the first place, but rather from the property taxes? Metro taxpayers should not be asked to shoulder this double tax burden. Further, the Fair Tax Commission, a commission which is costing the taxpayers of this province \$2.3 million, concluded, "Relying on property taxes to finance education is regressive."

Clearly, if your government forces the Metro school boards to remit property tax dollars to the province, it

is ignoring the recommendation of the Fair Tax Commission. Assuming that the savings projected under the social contract are achieved, I want the minister's assurance that the money will be rebated to the Metro property taxpayers.

The only acceptable answer to my question is a commitment that your government will not take a further tax grab from the Metro property taxpayers in order to finance your inept handling of the provincial economy. If your answer is to take this money away from the Metro taxpayers, then tell me why, having gone through the expensive exercise of the Fair Tax Commission, are you ignoring its findings?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I recognize the honourable member for Sault Ste Marie, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education and Training.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): On June 28, the member for York Mills asked a question about the impact of the social contract on the Metropolitan Toronto School Board. Today he has raised some additional points on this issue. I am pleased today to expand on the minister's answer in response to the honourable member's inquiry.

As members are aware, the provincial funding provided to Ontario school boards is determined by a mill rate formula which is consistently applied throughout the province. This ensures that quality education is available to all students, regardless of where they live. In areas such as Toronto and Ottawa, the high concentration of commercial and industrial wealth results in a negative grant situation. When the standard mill rate is applied to these areas, the local school boards receive more money than they are entitled to use, using the per-pupil formula from the general legislative grant.

Based on estimates submitted by the Metropolitan Toronto School Board, it is anticipated that the board will have in 1993 an excess of property tax income of \$284 million. Even after deducting all possible credits, the board is still \$73 million to the good. This negative grant is not reclaimed by the province; it remains in Metro schools. But it does preclude us from sending further money to a board with large financial resources.

I should point out that the province provides several grants to Ontario school boards which are independent of this grant calculation, including pay equity funding, Jobs Ontario Capital funding and the employer's share of the teachers' pension plan. For the Metro Toronto school board, this totals around \$100 million. These are provincial dollars which directly benefit the operation of the Metro Toronto school board and the pupils of that board.

The social contract target for the education sector is \$535 million. The Metro Toronto school board's portion of that target is \$92.6 million unless the board is part of a sectoral agreement or implements a non-bargaining

unit plan, in which case it will qualify for a lower target.

These targets are not based on a board's assessment well but on the total salaries and benefits of board employees. These targets represent the amount that each board can expect to save as a direct result of the social contract. If the Metro Toronto school board were not making this contribution, the province would have to increase the target for all other boards by more than 20%.

As members are aware, section 35 of the social contract allows the government to require boards to remit social contract savings to the province. This provision applies only to the social contract target and not to the negative grant, and only for the three-year period.

The social contract will not increase property taxes.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): That's unbelievable. You get \$100 million from them, and then you say taxes don't go up. What a load. What a joke.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Etobicoke West, come to order.

Mr Martin: On the contrary, the deficit reduction which will be achieved as a result of the social contract will benefit all Ontario taxpayers. By requiring a contribution from all boards which equals their social contract savings, this government is ensuring the equitable treatment of all school boards throughout the province—something you may not know much about—a solution that has the least possible impact on the pupils in Ontario schools, the fairest distribution of tough medicine required to see us through this revenue crisis, and a responsible and realistic approach to the fiscal realities facing all the major governments in the world today.

In closing, I'd like to stress that there will be no impact on property taxes anywhere in the province, and boards will not have surpluses or deficits as a result of the social contract. By having all boards contribute their social contract savings to the province, regardless of the percentage of a board's budget that is covered by local property taxes, we are ensuring equity across the province.

The Speaker: This House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow afternoon.

The House adjourned at 1818.

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Honourable David Warner

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L'honorable David Warner

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Wednesday 14 July 1993

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I want to focus my comments today on the challenges we face in this province on unemployment.

I think everyone's aware now that we're approaching three years of Bob Rae government. I would say that at the end of the Bob Rae era, the biggest failure of this government will be in the whole area of what's happened to our unemployed and our job situation.

If you look back at the 1960s, the unemployment rate in the province was around 3%, in the 1970s it was around 6%, in the 1980s it was around 7%, and it now looks like we are going to, certainly for the first half of the 1990s, according to the government's own projections, see unemployment above 10% for the entire first half of the 1990s. According to the budget, the real rate of unemployment right now is around 14%. We have over 725,000 people out of work right now in the province. As we saw, the number of part-time jobs is growing while the number of full-time jobs has declined dramatically.

I would say that while Premier Rae is fighting the deficit, I would urge him to get on with putting an even higher priority on what I think is more important, and that is creating a climate where we will see substantial new jobs created in this province.

PRODUCE-YOUR-OWN BEER AND WINE

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): As the PC small business advocate, I am today speaking against the 26-cent-a-litre tax announced in the spring budget on beer and wine made in produce-your-own beer and wine establishments, which comes into effect on August 1.

Produce-your-own beer and wine establishments, or you-brew stores, as they're also known, provide the ingredients and the equipment for customers who come into their premises to make their own beer and wine. Customers enjoy the hobby aspect of making beer and wine for their own consumption.

I have received many dozens of letters from people across Wellington county who are customers of brew-your-own establishments and object to the 26-cent-a-litre tax. I'm sure other members have also received mail from their constituents on this subject.

The popularity of this small but growing industry is probably partially attributable to the high taxes on store-bought beer. Brew-your-own beer and wine establishments are growing because there is significant consumer demand.

There is a fundamental restructuring of the economy taking place. It has been recognized by this government and by most economists that most new job growth, if there's any at all in the near term, will take place in the small business sector. Brew-your-own businesses have found a niche and are satisfying a consumer demand.

Then along comes the provincial government and squelches entrepreneurial spirit and small business growth by imposing excessive taxes on the beer produced in these establishments. Instead of facilitating small business growth, the government is making it difficult for brew-your-own businesses to survive.

The Brew-On-Premise Association of Ontario estimates that the tax imposed on on-premise operators will result in about a 40% closure and bankruptcy rate, significant loss of jobs and loss of revenue for the provincial government.

I urge the Minister of Finance to review the tax with a view to ensuring the survival of brew-your-own establishments.

DON WEST

Mr George Dadamo (Windsor-Sandwich): I wish to bring to the attention of this House the death of a popular television and radio personality in the city of Windsor.

Former television and radio performer Don West died at the age of 56, after a brief illness. He passed away recently, leaving behind a media legacy in the city of Windsor.

Don West was born in Windsor and worked most of his career in the city. After leaving high school, he began his radio career at CFCO in Chatham in 1955. Don West was also vice-president of programming at channel 9 before the CBC took over that TV station. He also worked in Calgary until 1981, then returned to Windsor to work at CKLW Radio.

But many will remember his involvement at CKLW. It was here that I met him for the second time; the first was as a teenager, when invited to view an evening broadcast at CBC when he was an anchor, and the second time was as a co-worker at CKLW Radio. He was news director at that radio station, television anchor at the CBC on Riverside Drive and later a marketing representative for a computer design company in the United States.

I had only known Don for a short period, but Neil Addison, former television colleague at channel 9 in Windsor said, "West's involvement and influence in the community ran deep." Neil went on to say, "He was my oldest and dearest friend."

My condolences to his wife, Linda, family and friends, and I shall always remember that studio visit at

CBC Windsor on Riverside Drive in the late 1960s.

1340

UNEMPLOYMENT IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I rise to report to the House on the work of the Liberal task force on northern priorities.

Last week the member for Timiskaming, the member for Kenora and I travelled to a number of communities in northeastern Ontario, including Kapuskasing, Hearst, Hornepayne, Wawa, Sault Ste Marie, Bruce Mines and Sudbury. As we talked and listened to the people in these communities, a number of issues were raised. I will highlight but one of them.

The people in these communities are losing their jobs, their livelihoods, because of the outright attack on forest workers by the Rae government. Reforestation efforts have been sharply curtailed, with 30 million fewer trees being planted in the crown forests of Ontario. Tending of the forest has decreased by 50% since Lyn McLeod was the Minister of Natural Resources. Jobs have been lost, people are not working, and now we have a new tax on northern jobs.

Lyn McLeod has been leading the fight against the 43% increase in stumpage fees and the doubling of area charges. These taxes on northern jobs are unacceptable. Northern jobs are becoming an endangered species with this government.

On behalf of the northern people and the northern communities, Lyn McLeod and the Liberal caucus demand a rescinding of this tax on northern jobs, northern workers and the northern environment.

TRUCKING INDUSTRY

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): The Minister of Transportation issued a press release this morning indicating that legislation would be introduced today permitting the use of longer trucks in Ontario. We have been informed that no statement would be made in the House, thus depriving me of the opportunity to respond.

It's about time that the Ontario trucking industry was given this kind of relief.

The Liberals feigned interest in this subject by introducing legislation in their last session immediately before their calling an unnecessary election. Longer truck lengths could and should have been adopted before that election was called. At that time the PC party supported the longer truck legislation, although the NDP was vociferous in its opposition.

In December 1990, the then Minister of Transportation said that the NDP would not be prepared to proceed with the lengthening of trucks.

This Minister of Transportation has credited the work done by me and my caucus colleagues in articulating the benefits of longer trucks with having caused him to reconsider the issue. I'm delighted that he has seen the light and is bringing legislation forward today.

The Ontario trucking industry is an industry in crisis, and this government has done little for it. The diesel fuel tax hurt the industry, and so has this government's procrastination on longer truck lengths.

Finally there will be a level playing field for Ontario truckers. Ontario will no longer be an island of uncompetitiveness.

CANADIAN AUTO WORKERS PICNIC

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): Along with my colleagues Mr O'Connor, Mr Mills and Mr Pilkey, I had the opportunity last Saturday of attending the 47th annual CAW picnic in Oshawa.

This was the first one to be held on the grounds of their new union hall, which overlooks Lake Ontario and sits on the border between Whitby and Oshawa. It was a remarkable success despite problems with parking and the inevitable bugs that emerge the first time you stage a major event.

The CAW picnic features a huge number of rides, family activities, many balloons, soft drinks and refreshments, a huge and humming activity centre.

Unlike my friend and colleague Larry O'Connor, I'm not a member of the CAW, yet I've been a guest on many occasions over the last 20 years. For example, I recall that the first time I attended, it was as a worker with the developmentally challenged, who were included in their festivities. Through their generosity, the CAW brings in the local community.

This was the first opportunity I had to congratulate John Kovacs, the newly elected president of the local. I met many of my constituents who work at General Motors and some of the other plants that 222 has organized.

The CAW has a long and proud history in our community and in our country, and it started in my community in Oshawa and in my riding in north Oshawa. For example, right now the CAW is entering into negotiations with General Motors, and they promise to be long and hard ones.

PROCEEDS OF CRIME

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): With the focus of attention riveted on the issue of crime and the ability of our justice system to deal adequately with it, the question of profits derived from crime has once again come to the forefront.

People in our society are naturally and justifiably revolted by the thought of those who commit a crime making a profit either directly or indirectly from such an action. The possibility that the perpetrator of a crime may gain wealth and fortune from selling a personal story to a publication or an electronic media outlet provokes anger and outrage in the hearts and minds of the population, particularly when victims and their loved ones have been subjected to heartbreak and sorrow.

I call upon the Attorney General to enact legislation

to prohibit the making of a profit from the sale of information about a crime committed by the informant. Such a law would receive speedy and, I am confident, unanimous support from all members of this House or any other parliamentary body.

Legislators who are in tune with the wishes of their constituents will be eager to address this genuine concern on the part of the overwhelming majority of the public.

The justice system must reflect a general consensus of the citizens of our province to inspire the kind of confidence and support it requires to serve us well. The enactment of such legislation will be a step in the right direction in the restoration of this confidence and support.

MASSASAUGA PROVINCIAL PARK

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): I think we all recognize that these are recessionary times. As part of the social contract negotiations, the Premier has asked municipalities to reduce their expenditures. These cutbacks will result in salary rollbacks and layoffs in many cases. It is difficult, therefore, to understand why the government would proceed with its plans to establish Massasauga Provincial Park, also known as Blackstone Park, in the township of the Archipelago. The cost of staffing and maintaining the park, as well as building a proposed new park office, could cost the Ontario taxpayers, for certain, hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars. This is money the taxpayers just do not have.

I am particularly concerned about the lack of cooperation with the municipality that has been displayed by the Ministry of Natural Resources. Apparently, a policy paper released by the ministry late last autumn states that parks within the jurisdiction of a municipality are not subject to the bylaws and policies of that municipality. During the recent renovations of Calhoun Lodge, which is located in the park, the Archipelago's bylaw inspector was not allowed to examine the site, despite his numerous health, safety and building concerns.

The municipality is responsible for increased maintenance costs of Healey Lake Road due to the increased traffic. The Archipelago is 100% responsible for the operation of the waste transfer station.

The ministry does appear to have the money, however, to plan a fireworks extravaganza on the opening of the park this Saturday. The ministry doesn't appear to have either the money or the staff to proceed properly, so my question is, why proceed at all?

GLENFIELD SPORTS CLUB

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): Again, I rise to talk about a positive that has come out of the Yorkview community, a positive that, in my opinion, marks a very historical year for us as well: the 25th anniversary of the Glenfield Sports Club.

Growing up in Yorkview all my life, I know baseball has always been a way of life for us, a way of life for me. At seven years old I joined my first team, 25 years ago, and played second base for that team. I'll never forget it. This year marks the 25th anniversary.

I want everybody in this place to please honour all of the coaches and the volunteers who give their time to this organization. Priority has always been for the children, and it hasn't stopped for 25 years.

If I may, I'd like to honour Pat Scenna, Laura Scott, Kathy McMillan, Laurie Langhorst, Ed Bobbitt, Danny Clyde, Graig Martia, Frank Carbone, Steve Lucas, Joe Cosentino, Gary Coleman, Danny Malkos, Sil Miniali, Norm Moore, Joe Santoli, Kirk Hancock and, of course, the president and the chair of Glenfield Sports Club, who joins us with his sons, David and Michael, Mr Doug McMillan, who's doing a marvellous job.

I want to thank them for coming down and I want to thank you for listening to me.

MINISTERIAL INFORMATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It's of interest to all of us on this side of the House that a controversy has been developing over the last several months and over the last several years about the introduction of 53-foot trailers on the highways of Ontario. It was announced by way of press release today. Our member from Nepean has continually asked the Minister of Transportation to come into the House and make the announcement. They have chosen not to come to the people's chamber to tell us about a new policy change.

We would ask, Mr Speaker, that you look into that as a point of order, bearing in mind that there have been non-replies to questions in the House on a daily basis from the member for Nepean. If we hadn't been asking for something to be done we could understand it, but the Minister of Transportation is here, could have made a statement and could have given due credit to the member for Nepean for his work on this issue.

1350

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): To the member for Bruce, he will know that personal understanding or even sympathy on the part of the Speaker does not replace the standing orders. He does not have a point of order. It is, however, time for oral questions. A point of order, the Minister of Transportation.

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): The member opposite becomes at times, if not insatiable, very impatient. I just glanced at the proceedings, orders of the day, and I see that ample opportunity is given under introduction of bills. Mr Speaker, you are the master of this House and very cognizant of each and every rule and I only wish that your expertise and wisdom would rub off on the member of the opposition. All he has to do is wait a few hours.

Mr Elston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: In this case, there is a point of order inasmuch as we have no opportunity to reply to the introduction of a bill on first reading. You know that; I know that. He will be making a statement of government policy around the introduction of this bill in this House, even if it is today, and the opposition has no opportunity to reply.

We wouldn't feel quite so slighted by this process if the Minister of Transportation was going to give due credit to the member for Nepean for his hard work on this and, indeed, even the members of the third party on this, but I can tell you, Mr Speaker, from our experience the New Democrats give no credit—they take a bunch of it, you know; their budget really speaks of it, but I think that he, already acknowledging he's going to bring this in, should make a statement so we can all have a chance to reply to this important public policy change.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): On the same point of order, Mr Speaker: It would appear that the minister has indeed somewhat misled us, suggesting that at the time of introduction of bills we have an opportunity to respond—

The Speaker: No, the member does not want to suggest that another member is misleading anyone in here.

Mr Turnbull: Mr Speaker, I would ask for unanimous consent for the minister to make a statement so we could respond.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for the Minister of Transportation to make a statement? No. Rather than the introduction of bills, perhaps we'll start with oral questions, and it's the member for Ottawa East.

ORAL QUESTIONS SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East): My question today would have been directed to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, but in his absence I will go to the Premier. Your social contract has received another setback yesterday: the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the regional chairs of this province rejected the terms of the draft sectoral agreement dictated by your government under Bill 48.

I want to remind the Premier that our caucus has opposed Bill 48 from day one. Like the municipalities, we felt it was flawed and unworkable and yesterday's results from AMO and the regional chairs are of no surprise and, as our leader pointed out repeatedly, one size fits all doesn't always work in the province of Ontario, especially at the municipal level.

I want to remind the Premier that municipalities in this province are willing to work with your government to find a solution to our problem. I say "our problem" because we are all responsible people, I hope.

What is the province planning to do to respond to the

municipalities' concern, and are you willing to sit down with AMO and regional chairs to find a solution?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): My answer to my good friend from Ottawa East—and I hope partisanship hasn't reached a point where I can't speak those words in the House, because he is a good friend to all of us—and say to him—and I would say the same thing to my colleague from Bruce—

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): What have you got against Ben?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Rae: The member for Parry Sound is heckling me. He and I are going to be together on Friday, so I'm not sure why he'd be ashamed of that association.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): I can hear him now: "Me and the Premier brung you this cheque."

Hon Mr Rae: No, I think it will be, "Me and the Premier brung you this demonstration."

The simple answer to the member for Ottawa East is that I think the truth about the situation in terms of the positions that have been taken by the board of directors at AMO and by the regional chairs is that if you look at the actual resolution that was passed, the resolution states very clearly, as opposed to some of the headlines and the various editorial judgements that have been made with respect to the statements, that they are willing and eager to work within the framework and the context of the social contract legislation to reach a sectoral agreement with the government with respect to municipalities.

We have indicated very clearly this morning to them and to the regional chairs that we are ready, willing and able to meet any time. I hope that meetings can be started under way today. I see no reason for a delay. We're very eager to reach a settlement, and I believe that should be possible. So when you ask the question, am I willing to meet—

The Speaker: Will the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —the answer to that is, "Absolutely." I'm not sure that's going to be necessary at this point because there are negotiations that are well under way. The negotiators have a clear mandate from the government and from the cabinet, and we look forward very much to an amicable and successful resolution of these discussions.

Mr Grandmaître: Mr Premier, your offer of friendship—I've just been reminded that I'm going to lose 36 friends on this side of the House if I accept your friendship. But now to my supplementary.

Mr Premier, I don't have to remind you that today is July 14, and your August 1 deadline is fast approaching.

We are within two weeks, and many local municipalities are still meeting with local unions, trying to meet your deadline.

They are very concerned about the deferral cost. They can live with the three-year salary freeze, but the 36 days that some municipal employees will accumulate over three years will cost my regional municipality some \$10 million, so where is the economy?

Even if local municipalities succeed in finding cuts, they won't be eligible for the reduced targets. As you know, under Bill 48, a local employer is only eligible for the 20% reduction in transfer payment cuts if a sectoral agreement is reached.

Given that AMO and the regional chairs have now rejected your proposal, Mr Premier, if local municipalities do meet their target, their cuts, will you give them the extra 20% for having done a good job?

Hon Mr Rae: Let me start with what I still believe is the reality. The reality underlying all the furore and so on is that the municipalities and so on come back with a set of concerns about what they would like in the agreement, which I think is perfectly understandable, is part of the bargaining process. We're ready, willing and able to do that under the sectoral process.

If there is a successful sectoral agreement, obviously any local agreements that are reached will meet the 20% target. I think the member knows full well the purpose of having the 20% reduction there; it's very clear. The purpose of it is to encourage people to reach agreements and to encourage that they be reached within a sectoral context and with a sectoral understanding that provides for the adequate protection of employees.

1400

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): The terms of friendship I'd be pleased to discuss only if the Premier will come to Dunnville to discuss some unmet promises back there.

As my colleague has just stated, our caucus opposed Bill 48 from day one because, like elected municipal councils, we felt it was flawed and unworkable. As the August deadline approaches, the sectoral talks with municipalities and other employers continue to flounder under the terms and conditions dictated under Bill 48.

There can be restraint without chaos. Just set your financial targets. Negotiate with your employees and give municipalities and other employees the tools they need to negotiate local wage reductions under their own terms and conditions to meet their local needs. This is what we've been demanding from day one; it is what municipalities have been demanding.

Bill 48 is not working. Mr Premier, will you not admit this to be true? Bring in something that works and give municipalities the options and flexibility they need to make local cuts.

Hon Mr Rae: I think that what we're finding in fact

again, despite all the rhetoric and the position that has been taken by the official opposition, as I understand it, you're opposed to the restraint legislation. You seem to be opposed to people meeting targets. You're opposed to this happening. That's the Liberal position.

The member who has just spoken, I know what the people in his riding are feeling and thinking with regard to this issue. The Liberals' position has been no to the restraint legislation, no to the kinds of positions that we've had to take, no to this, no to that, no to any realistic attempts to deal with it.

The flexibility that needs to be shown will be shown at the bargaining table. That's what we're demonstrating. We're sitting down with our own employees. It's not easy. There are going to be differences. Sometimes you have to be firm; sometimes you have to be flexible. We're trying as hard as we can to reach agreements in a very difficult circumstance.

But I would have thought that the honourable member who has just spoken from Brant county would say very clearly and would understand as keenly as anyone that it is in the interests of the public that there be settlements and that there be negotiations and that there be agreements.

I would have thought what the member for Brant would be standing up and saying is, "Premier, we might have had some differences in the past, but whatever those differences are, we're all agreed on the need to encourage people to talk, to encourage negotiation, to encourage flexibility and to discourage the kind of rhetoric which makes it harder to reach agreements," instead of which the Liberal opposition seems to be promoting the kind of rhetoric which makes it harder to reach settlements.

I am truly surprised by the positions that have been taken by the Liberal Party—

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —which put partisanship clearly ahead of the public interest. We put the public interest ahead of partisanship.

Mr Eddy: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I just wish to advise the House that I represent the riding of Brant-Haldimand.

The Speaker: The member indeed has a point of order.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): It should be very clear by now that Lyn McLeod had basically suggested what AMO has been asking for for some time, and she's done it for several months. We put the option for these people to use, and they've rejected our option.

JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): In the absence of Mrs Ziemba, who is the Minister of Citizenship, I'd like to put the question to the Attorney General. Well

reported is a report that comes out of the Ontario Human Rights Commission which suggests that the people will reverse the presumption of innocence in regard to certain legal proceedings being taken in the province of Ontario. This is something that is a major departure. Even thinking about convicting people prior to any kind of investigation or otherwise is a major change in the direction of justice in this province.

I want the Attorney General to advise the House today that her government will not stand for this, and I want to understand what action she has taken and the Minister of Citizenship has taken to make sure that justice not only is done but is seen to be done.

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I'm grateful to the member opposite for the question because we are deeply concerned by this report this morning as well. I've spoken with the Minister of Citizenship who, like me, has not seen the report herself. We understand this report was commissioned by the Human Rights Commission as an advisory report on where to go.

It certainly in no way reflects the position of this government or the province of Ontario, where the presumption of innocence is absolutely the foundation of our legal system. We are both looking at the issue and waiting to see the report before we make any further comment.

Mr Elston: It seems really unusual for us in this House that a minister of the crown who is charged with responsibility for a major portfolio, including human rights, and the justice minister in this government, which came into power, I might say, uttering words about fairness and justice for all, would not be aware after several months that a report of this nature is haunting the halls of power in this place.

I want to understand how it is that the Young report has gone undetected when in fact there have been major discussions about the activities at the Ontario Human Rights Commission. There have been wholesale discussions about the activities that it will be undertaking.

I want the Attorney General, if she is unable to do it herself, to refer the question and ask the Minister of Citizenship how she could be unaware of this sort of report that presumes people to be guilty before investigation or before a proceeding in front of the Human Rights Commission. Why was she unaware that this is even being talked about?

Hon Mrs Boyd: The member opposite is well aware that I cannot refer the question to my colleague once I have answered. He is quite aware of that.

The second thing that he is also well aware of, as everyone in this House is, is that the Ontario Human Rights Commission is a quasi-judicial body that operates at arm's length from the government. This government did not commission this report. This government

does not own this report. In no way do we condone the kind of conclusions reached by the author of this report.

Mr Elston: It's very interesting, the damage control that is being undertaken by this administration today. The report has been around since October. It has been unavailable, at least in its form, to the minister. Maybe it has been in her office. Maybe it has been someplace. Somebody knows about it.

But today we are told that a covering memo, undated, was released to the staff and to others that talks about not only the Young report but also Arnold Minors's report and others so as to construct a tale that they are looking for creative recommendations out of all the reports.

There is a plethora of reporting going on at that place, studies and other things which the Minister of Citizenship not only should know about but, if she were interested, should in fact be involved in, because of the issues raised about human rights in this province.

I want to know why these memos are being used to cover up and to construct a story around these types of reports. Will the minister tell us when she will investigate this type of reconstructive history being carried on by this administration when it is trying to change the onus or the presumption of innocence of people in this province?

Hon Mrs Boyd: We have already begun an investigation to find out exactly what has transpired here. But I would remind the member that he would probably be the first one to be very disturbed if he felt that there were any political influence or pressure being brought to bear on a quasi-judicial body like the Human Rights Commission.

Mr Elston: This is public policy. You are changing the justice system.

Hon Mrs Boyd: It is not public policy in Ontario.

Mr Elston: You didn't put a stop to it. Put a stop to it.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Bruce.

Hon Mrs Boyd: The member opposite is well aware that the necessity for the Minister of Citizenship to maintain an arm's-length distance from this commission is very important. It's very important to us all. We have, however, both of us as ministers who are concerned about the kind of publicity that would surround a suggestion like this initiated an inquiry to find out exactly what is going on. I would repeat that we share the concern that the member has. This is not appropriate on behalf of the authors.

1410

The Speaker: New question, third party, the leader of the third party.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I want to follow

up with the same question that has been raised concerning the story this morning in the Toronto Sun, that the Ontario Human Rights Commission has recommended that a person accused of racism should be guilty until proven innocent.

This is pretty straightforward, you know what I mean? I've got the report here. I don't know why you haven't read it, considering how long it has been around and you're responsible, Madam Attorney General, for justice in this province, and your colleague is responsible, or at least you say you're supposed to be responsible.

Interjection.

Mr Harris: The Premier interjects, "We're not doing anything." That's exactly the problem. You're not doing anything. There's no leadership. There's no direction. A lot of these agencies and boards and commissions are totally out of control, spending taxpayers' money, running amok, commissioning reports that presumably the taxpayers are going to pay for.

I want to ask the Attorney General this, and I don't want to hear that it's not your responsibility or that it belongs to the Minister of Citizenship. I don't want to hear about the commission being at arm's length. I don't want to hear the proposals are at the discussion stage.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): Tell us what you want.

Mr Harris: What I want to hear and what the people of this province want to hear, from the Attorney General, the minister responsible for justice in this province, is that this is totally unacceptable, you reject it, quit wasting your time studying it, no way in Ontario while you're the Attorney General. Will you say that today?

Hon Mrs Boyd: Yes, much less histrionically I already did in answer to the first question.

Mr Harris: We had 20 minutes today for statements by the ministers where a statement could have been made. All day we've had this report being carried on radio stations, being read in the newspapers. We've not heard a peep, not a peep from the Premier, from the Attorney General or from the Minister of Citizenship. "I want to read the report," they've said.

What we want you to do is disavow any hint or scent or anything that has to do with allowing this kind of statement to be any way affiliated with any justice system here in the province of Ontario. Will you leave this chamber, will you now go public, will you issue a statement, will you say, "No way will we have anything to do with it," because you still haven't said that.

Hon Mrs Boyd: I'm so delighted that the member opposite has so much energy as a result of his recent absence from the House that he can use all this energy in this histrionic way.

Of course this is not the policy of this government. It is not the policy in Ontario. It is a report that was commissioned by a commission, and many opinions get expressed in the course of various groups asking for opinions. I must say that if we were to look at social assistance or child care or any of the other policy matters, we see many groups and many individuals expressing views on many social policy issues that governments don't accept and do not put into any play.

The Minister of Citizenship this morning quite clearly denied in a media scrum—

Mr Harris: No, she didn't.

Hon Mrs Boyd: She did indeed. She said that the presumption of guilt was in no way part of the policy of this government.

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Mrs Boyd: Why would we take seriously an idea like this when we haven't read it, we are only taking the word of the media and it's really impossible for us to comment any further than to say this is not government policy and will not be?

Mr Harris: I'd like to ask the Attorney General why we had no statement at any time today until question period started from the minister responsible for justice, and can you tell me how much this report cost, who commissioned it and why?

Hon Mrs Boyd: I can't tell him how much it cost, but I'm sure the Minister of Citizenship would be happy to report that to him. It was commissioned by the commission itself, which is responsible for its own budget. It is not our responsibility to report on the way in which it deals with it. It is our responsibility—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): You're damn right it's your responsibility; it's taxpayers' money.

The Speaker: Would the minister take her seat, please.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Has the minister completed her response?

Hon Mrs Boyd: It would be improper for us to intervene at that close level, as political people, in the operation of an organization that is quasi-judicial. If we did so, you would be the first to criticize us.

The Speaker: New question.

Mr Harris: If it's not the government's and the cabinet's responsibility, I don't know whose responsibility it is. You're in charge. You're supposed to be running this province. Obviously, everything is running amok because you say, "It's not our responsibility."

The Speaker: And your second question?

ONTARIO HYDRO SPENDING

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My next question is to the Premier. Can the Premier tell this

House and everyone watching today if he's acquired any new appliances recently?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I don't know what the member is talking about.

Mr Harris: I think it's pretty straightforward. I asked if you had acquired any new appliances. Just yes or no would have answered that, or you could have told us.

According to Ontario Hydro, this is a very important question. They spent \$1.3 million on a poll to find out if people tell their neighbours when they get a new appliance. They also asked clients, for \$1.3 million worth of poll and information, how strongly they agreed with statements such as, "It is important to be in love and have a love relationship that lasts." Then this question, for \$1.3 million: "Do you agree or disagree that often people get ahead just by being lucky?"

Our freedom of information request says Hydro spent \$1.3 million for this survey, and if you complete it right away you're eligible for a trip for two to Hawaii or a big-screen TV, at a time when Ontario Hydro is expecting a \$1.6-billion loss. We all know what's wrong at Ontario Hydro. How can you justify \$1.3 million worth of expense for a poll, a survey, that's asking these kinds of questions?

Hon Mr Rae: Perhaps the honourable member would like to share the whole survey with us. Obviously, I haven't seen it. I don't know what he's talking about. I don't know where he gets his information from. I don't know what it's based on.

Mr Harris: Premier, I get it from freedom—this is what's wrong. The Attorney General doesn't know: "Oh, we're arm's length. We're not responsible." You are responsible for Ontario Hydro.

Despite the embarrassing nature of this \$1.3-million survey and the ridiculousness of the questions, it's really indicative of a very serious problem. Ontario Hydro has a \$34-billion debt. It's laying off 6,000 employees. It says it wants the province to forgive its \$100-million social contract payment.

They didn't need a survey of any kind to tell them what the public thinks of Ontario Hydro. Hydro costs too much. It's out of control. It's run amok. Time and time again in this Legislature, I've raised the ridiculous examples of waste, of poor tendering practices, and it seems to me as if nothing has changed since the Liberals said they were in charge and Hydro had run amok and was out of control.

Can you tell me when you're going to be able to stand in this place and say: "We're responsible. We, the cabinet, are responsible. We're in charge here and we are answerable"? When are you going to get Ontario Hydro under control?

Hon Mr Rae: Whenever I hear from a Tory on the subject of Ontario Hydro and they talk about the cost of

Ontario Hydro—let me tell the honourable member something that perhaps he doesn't realize and perhaps he doesn't know. Ontario Hydro has been awash in debt. That debt started in the mid-1970s. It was caused by the decisions that were made by the Tory government, by the Tory party, of which he was the most loyal supporter. It was continued by the Liberal Party—of which the members who've been today taking questions about Hydro.

The issues about Hydro are not about a poll. The issues about Hydro are about a nuclear project which was supposed to cost \$3.5 billion under his government, and under the previous government rose to nearly \$14 billion. That's the issue at Ontario Hydro. The issue at Ontario Hydro is a utility that was out of control and has been brought under control by a chairman who deserves the support.

1420

I say to the honourable member, you tell me when, under the Tory government, there was a rate freeze at Ontario Hydro. You tell me when, under a Tory government, there was a chairman who had the courage and the straightforwardness to say there are going to have to be changes. Instead of the kinds of trivial questions you're asking, why don't you ask something important which relates to public policy and which truly matters? You should be embarrassed by your approach today, embarrassed by what you've just said.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question, the member for Bruce.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I haven't had that much applause in a long time. That response by the Premier reminds me of C.D. Howe, "So what's a million?" That's Bob Rae, "What's a million bucks?" He says it's a trivial question.

PROCEEDS OF CRIME

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I want to go back to the Attorney—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. It may be a novelty, but I thought we'd try one question at a time. The member for Bruce.

Mr Elston: To the Attorney General, there has been a considerable amount of tension recently around a criminal court case in this province, and there is considerable outrage at the prospect that criminals can make money from the proceeds of selling their stories to the media, wherever those people are. I want the Attorney General to tell us today that she will be moving expeditiously to introduce legislation to prevent criminals from making money from the results of their crimes.

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I'm not prepared to make that commitment today, but I certainly

told the standing committee on administration of justice and the subcommittee that was looking into victims' rights that it is an idea I am prepared to study in all its ramifications. I am not closed to it at all, but I also need to be very clear about what the ramifications would be of interfering with the rights of someone who has been a perpetrator of a crime and has been convicted of that crime. But I'm not closed to the idea. I certainly know this is something that incenses a large number of citizens in the province and certainly is something that we're prepared to look at seriously.

Mr Elston: I don't understand and the people don't understand why it is that this Attorney General can't stand in her place and say that presuming somebody is guilty until they prove themselves innocent is wrong, and I don't understand why this Attorney General won't stand up and say that she will introduce legislation, which this caucus will support straightaway, that will prevent criminals from taking advantage and making money from their crimes.

We expect you would want to have the legislation say that any money even offered that was accepted and that was discovered by the crown would be taken for the purposes of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. Why can't you just make one decision, which the public is crying out in this province to have taken? It's simple and it's necessary. Why will she not give us that undertaking, and the undertaking to the public, that she will be acting expeditiously?

Hon Mrs Boyd: In answer to the preamble, I have said very clearly in this House that this government and this province do not in any way accept any kind of change in policy that would presume people guilty, not innocent, so his statement that I had not made that commitment is wrong. I have been very clear about that.

Number two, the member opposite probably knows also that one of our former members, the late Jim Renwick, brought into this Legislature some 15 years ago a very comprehensive bill which would have had the same effect as he is suggesting. It was not passed by the Conservative government of the day. In the five years that this Liberal Party was in power, it made no move to do this. I am a responsible enough Attorney General that I would want to look at all the implications of this, because I assume that my colleagues on the other side of the House had some reason for not leaping with alacrity to pass such an act.

The Speaker: New question, the leader of the third party.

Mr Harris: I think Leslie Frost tried to do it and you guys blocked it. I'm not sure, though. That would be a good excuse. How about the member for Burlington's victims' rights bill? How long are you going to let that sit on the back burner?

The Speaker: To whom is your question directed?

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Premier. On Monday, the member for Don Mills asked the Minister of Municipal Affairs about your government's social contract proposals for municipalities. I would have asked him, except this morning the minister said, "I didn't know municipalities had a problem," so obviously there's no point in asking him, and this social contract is yours.

The proposal, of which I have a draft copy, looks more like it's designed to increase the clout of unions in running our municipalities than it is to cut costs.

What I simply want to know is this: If the goal is to cut 5% from the cost, if that's what it's all about, why is it that you fill up your proposals with union management rights, all the other rhetoric, giving more power to unions, putting barriers in the way of municipalities that truly want to help you, that want to comply, that want to cut costs 5%? The only reason they can't is because of all the barriers you put in the way. Can you explain that?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I'll refer that to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): The spirit of the social contract clearly is to forge new partnerships. We need a new way of doing business in the province. We need a new way in which both municipalities and the provincial government can work with unions, can work with business, and that's the whole thrust of the social contract. I'm sorry that the honourable member is still in the dinosaur age of management and doesn't see that this is the way in which you do business.

Mr Harris: I think, Minister, if you were present when the Premier showed you the W5 show—I know he showed it to everybody about five times—the goal wasn't about giving unions more power; the goal was to cut the size and cost of government, to cut the payroll of the civil service. It was too big, it was unaffordable and taxpayers couldn't sustain that level. The municipalities said, "We agree," and we said, "We agree."

They tried to help you, and every time they give you a proposal for how they can cut their share by 5%, you put the \$30,000 barrier in the road. In many municipalities, the majority of their employees are under \$30,000. You put the barrier in the road with all this other rhetoric of allowing non-elected union heads to run the municipality, to make the decisions that should be made by the elected representatives.

Minister, just because you're at arm's length from every decision you don't like, municipalities want to be hands-on, accountable, responsible. I would ask you again, why do you keep putting these barriers in front of municipalities and the transfer partners, preventing them from saving the 5%?

Hon Mr Philip: There is nothing in the social contract proposal that in any way negates that the bottom line is that the elected representative, be it at the provincial level or at the municipal level, makes the final policy decisions; there's absolutely nothing in those contract proposals. For the honourable leader of the third party to suggest otherwise is just being outright mischievous and is not adding to the ability of our reaching an agreement.

I realize that the policy of his government is to cut in a mindless way without consultation. That's not the policy of this government. We don't think it's worked elsewhere and we think we have a better solution to dealing with people through cooperation rather than bang, bang, bang.

1430

COMMUNITY INFORMATION CENTRES

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): My question is to the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation. In my riding of Wentworth North, we have three community information centres; There's one in Dundas, one in Ancaster and one in Flamborough. All across the province, community information centres are in touch with the needs of their communities.

Like many other institutions, they are concerned about the impact of the government's spending restraints. They are worried about their ability to continue to do their valuable work. They're also concerned about the impact of the social contract on their ability to deliver the services they provide.

Minister, what can I tell the CICs in my riding about their future? What will you do to ensure that they can continue to operate and that my constituents will continue to have access to CIC services?

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): Like the member for Wentworth North, I've long recognized the important value of community information centres in our communities. In fact, I used to teach working people, through union counsellor courses around this province, about the value of them.

I was very proud when my colleague the Honourable Karen Haslam announced in this House in December 1992 the first-ever provincial stable ongoing funding for community information centres in the amount of \$1.1 million. Since that time, our ministry has developed distribution criteria for that money in order to distribute it fairly to CICs to support their on-line Ontario network throughout this province and to develop the automated database that they need to work.

The social contract implications to the community information centres amount to a reduction of 0.76% decrease in transfer payments to them overall. This is not seen as having any major staff impact on them.

The last thing I should point out is that there are also

project grants that go to community information centres from my ministry. The overall pool for that is \$100,000, and like the funding I referred to of the \$1.1 million stable funding, both of those figures we've managed to protect, in spite of the fiscal climate in the province this year—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Swarbrick: —because of the important role the community information centres play.

Mr Abel: Thank you, Madam Minister. In your response, you had mentioned that there was \$100,000 for project grants that was to be directed towards automating centres that are currently not part of the on-line Ontario network. Will the social contract affect this budget?

Interjections.

Hon Ms Swarbrick: I am sorry, Mr Speaker. I could not hear that.

The Speaker: Could the member just read the question part, the interrogative?

Mr Abel: I had asked, as to the \$100,000 for project grants that was to be directed towards automating centres that are currently not part of the on-line Ontario network, will the social contract affect this budget?

Hon Ms Swarbrick: No, it will not affect project grants. The purpose of those project grants is to help automate centres that are not now a part of the on-line Ontario information network, so it's more a capital expenditure that those dollars go for.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY AGENCY

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): My question is to the Minister of Labour. I've asked you some questions in the past about the Workplace Health and Safety Agency, and I'd like to refer you to what I consider to be really a crisis in that health and safety agency.

In an attempt, since we last discussed this, to understand the many complaints I've received about the operation of this agency, I've met with the agency's two vice-chairs and researched their activities. I have no choice but to arrive at the conclusion that misinformation, mismanagement and misdirection are the order of the day at this agency. By way of example:

(1) The neutral chair, Vic Pathe, quit and has never been replaced.

(2) Thirteen high-level staff have quit or been fired in less than two years under unusual circumstances.

(3) Five employer board reps have resigned from the agency.

(4) A small business advisory council has been set up, as promised, but has yet to meet.

(5) Recently, Shelley Schleuter, the chair of the management advisory committee, has quit in complete

frustration with the activities.

Minister, what in the world is going on at this agency, and how do you plan to bring it under control?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): The agency went through some initial growing pains. It's a major operation; it is responsible for health and safety right across the province. It has just finished the certification program. It has a full board, management and labour, an equal number, which is working at the present time and working very effectively.

Interjection.

Mr Mahoney: My colleague says, is he talking about the same agency? I have to wonder that.

Let me read from this letter dated June 23, from the chair of the advisory committee from management, Ms Shelley Schleuter. She says with regard to her decision to resign as chair:

"I have come to this decision out of frustration and a growing sense of futility. I'm frustrated that the efforts of the past year and a half have still not produced a process that is open, direct and free from manipulation by agency staff and the vice-chairs.

"The continued absence of a neutral chair and misinformation in official agency newsletters are just two examples of repeated concerns that have not been adequately addressed.

"The two vice-chairs say that they have reached consensus on the merger of the safety delivery organizations, but if this is so, the question is, why doesn't Dennis Timbrell at the OHA or Irene Krahn at the COSHA know about this consensus? Why are the majority of training sites for the certification programs in union halls around this province instead of on the job sites or in the universities or colleges where they were originally planned to be?

"This is simply just furthering labour's agenda at the expense of management in the delivery of proper health and safety information in this province."

In light of all of these allegations, backed up I might add by letters from Mr Timbrell, Ms Krahn and from others very upset with the function of this agency, will the minister appoint a neutral chair to replace Mr Pathe immediately to rein in these two vice-chairs and restore some confidence in the business community and in this program?

Minister, it takes two to tango. You're on a one-way street. We've got to get management and labour working together. Will you appoint that neutral chair immediately to take charge of this agency before it self-destructs?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I think some of the concern of the member across the way surfaced in the middle of his question, that is, with the mergers of some of the health delivery agencies. We had 12 of them in the province of

Ontario, and there is no justification in tough times for that duplication of effort.

The board itself at the agency is trying to cut that down^o to four. They're working on that, successfully, I might say, and they are doing it as a joint board with an equal number of labour and management people on that board. I think they have been successful, and I think it's now working very well.

SECURITY AT CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): My question is for the Chair of Management Board. Twice in recent months I've asked the minister about cell bars, locks and security systems that are defective in several correctional facilities, courthouses and OPP stations. The defects include jail bars that are soft rather than tool-resisting steel and security systems which show a cell to be secure when in fact the door is unlocked.

When I asked about this serious situation on May 10, the minister said: "Actions are being taken with the contractor responsible.... We're proceeding to investigate other installations."

Sources tell me that so far the investigation has discovered deviations at every site that has been inspected. However, apparently the same contractor continues to bid on Ontario government projects. Minister, surely allowing this firm to bid on jails is like letting the fox design the hen-house. Will you take action to prevent this contractor from bidding on government projects?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): As has been said by myself and I believe my colleague the Minister of Correctional Services on a number of occasions in response to this issue, the matter has been investigated by the government. As I understand it, the OPP is looking at aspects of this issue, so I can't comment any further on the specific investigation. The results of those investigations, though, I think will speak very clearly to the issues that the member raises.

1440

Mrs Marland: I don't think the minister heard my question. You said you would take action with the contractor responsible for these serious security problems. It is not enough to require that the contractor fix the defective work and pay for the replacement costs; the contractor should also be required to pay the full costs of having to defer the opening of the new Mimico corrections facility until the locks on 96 doors have been replaced.

What I would like to know is: Will this contractor be required to pay for the delays at Mimico? You had already hired the staff and they're sitting doing nothing because they're unable to work in a facility that won't open. And why in heaven's name would you allow this contractor, who, by your own admission a few minutes

ago, is under investigation, to continue to bid on government work?

Hon Mr Charlton: It seems to me we had a discussion here in this House less than an hour ago with the leader of the third party raising a question about presumption of innocence. There is an ongoing investigation, but this minister and his colleagues aren't going to convict anybody until we've seen the results of those investigations.

AGRICULTURAL LAND

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. In today's paper, there's an article on page A12 that has some rather—

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): Which paper, Wiseman?

Mr Wiseman: The Toronto Star. I wouldn't want to leave you—as if you know how to read, anyway.

The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization has reported some alarming statistics having to do with the disappearance of agricultural land. It says, "If things continue as they are, the rising population and the shrinking land base are going to meet each other—let us say in 30 years' time."

It also says, "Analysis of man-made land degradation raises a fundamental question: Are we going to have enough good land to feed the extra 2.6 billion people who will be on this planet by the year 2025?"

I rise to ask this question because all around the city of Toronto there are classes 1, 2 and 3 farm land, the best farm land in the world, and yet it is being taken out of production by man's use. Developers on a continuous basis are taking this land and are making development out of it and it's being lost to agricultural potential. I would like to ask the minister what we are doing in terms of preservation of this agricultural land.

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): In terms of the article that the honourable member refers to, it talks about the loss of topsoil, and he's also talking about the loss of farm land. There are two issues here.

One is the preservation of topsoil. Farmers are changing their way of doing things. There are groups out there across the province, soil and crop improvement associations and other groups, that are concerned with preserving topsoil and are changing the way they farm in this province, significantly over the last four or five years, in fact. Farmers are adjusting their practices so they don't lose the topsoil through erosion.

In terms of the second part of his comment about preserving agricultural land, I'm sure the member may recall and other people will remember the Sewell commission report, the final report that came out some two weeks ago, which recommended to the Minister of Municipal Affairs that we preserve all classes 1, 2 and

3 agricultural land, I believe it is. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and the government will be looking at the recommendations in that report, and I certainly hope we can implement some policies and guidelines that in fact will protect the good agricultural land that surrounds the urban centres in this province.

Mr Wiseman: I'm pleased to hear that, but while we sit here in this building, there is a building down the road in Durham called the Durham regional council, where that council is just passing carte blanche almost 22,000 acres of good land into an official plan. This land will be lost over the next 20 years. This land's equivalent size is the size of the city of Toronto, yet nobody is even interested in worrying about the preservation of this agricultural land in Durham region.

I think we need to act, and I would like to know how it is that the Sewell commission or any other policies will prevent this kind of irresponsible rezoning and official plan amendment creation?

Hon Mr Buchanan: Official plan amendments and the official plans themselves are approved and sanctioned by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs; also, my ministry usually comments on those official plan amendments when they involve agricultural land. The area that the member refers to I understand is good agricultural land and I would, in response to his question, hope that the two ministries would make the appropriate and correct response when it comes to preserving farm land in his riding.

MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. On May 17, the Premier told this House that although the municipalities of the province did not support the disentanglement reforms, the government was planning to move ahead with disentanglement.

The Premier said, and I quote, "Of course, we'd much prefer to do it on a cooperative basis with the municipalities, but the reality of social assistance and reform and the need to make those reforms is very, very clear."

Will the Minister of Community and Social Services indicate how the reforms announced will affect municipal costs and how the government intends to proceed in light of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's rejection of the disentanglement package for many, many reasons?

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): The member raises a very useful question. I thank him for the opportunity to be able to say in this House, as I have been saying publicly in other forums and indeed as I had the occasion to say to AMO representatives with whom I met recently, that we remain intent on proceeding with the social assistance reform and on having to deal, within that reform, with

the question of the delivery of the social assistance system as we move towards one unified system. We have said that consistently to the municipalities through the disentanglement discussions and since the disentanglement discussions have ended.

I know that my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs is continuing in his discussions with municipalities around the disentanglement issues and the resulting effect of AMO turning down that agreement. We have undertaken, and I've stated this publicly as well to AMO, that before we make any decisions around the question of the delivery of social assistance under the new system we would need to have a number of significant discussions with the municipalities and we intend to do that.

Mr Eddy: Again to the minister, the matter of costs, of course, is paramount. Does the government intend to unilaterally implement disentanglement, and how much will this cost municipalities? Given the costs already implemented under the expenditure control plan and procedures under the social contract, will the minister guarantee that social assistance reforms will not create additional costs or a tax increase for ratepayers?

Hon Mr Silipo: It is not the intent of the social assistance reform to push any of the burden of additional costs on to property taxpayers, if that's the question the honourable member is asking.

Certainly he will know, from the discussions and from the agreement that had been arrived at with AMO on the disentanglement, that there was to be a tradeoff of dollars. In exchange for the province picking up the costs of general welfare, there would be an exchange of an equivalent amount of dollars in terms of unconditional grants and road grants that the municipalities would be picking up.

Exactly what will happen under the new delivery system and under the question of costs is certainly still to be sorted out, but certainly I can say it is not our intent unilaterally to shift costs to the municipalities. There has to be a sorting out of that issue and clearly, both in discussions that we are going to have through the Ministry of Community and Social Services and I know in discussions that the Minister of Municipal Affairs is continuing to have with the municipalities, we hope to be able to sort that out.

1450

COURT REPORTERS

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): My question is to the Attorney General. You recently announced that your ministry would be automating the court reporting system in Ontario. This will effectively put 700 people, mostly women, out of work. Can you guarantee for the people of Ontario that this system will never break down?

Interjections.

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): The member's question is not at all humorous, because this is exactly the fear that members who are working in the court system are most concerned about. There have been problems in many jurisdictions around recording, and we share his concern that the phasing in of this be done in a very careful way, that we use the appropriate kind of technology to ensure the accuracy and the completeness of the court record. That is absolutely essential.

I can assure the member that the phasing in of this will take account, as it must, of the needs of our staff. These people have only recently become part of the regular civil service as the result of an arbitration hearing, and we are working very, very hard to ensure that their rights under our agreements are fulfilled.

There will still be a need for people in this area. When transcripts need to be done, when special work needs to be done, there will obviously be a need for many of those, particularly those who are experienced in the field, to continue their work.

Mr Harnick: What concerns me is that these are 700 people, mostly women, professional people, who are going to lose their jobs for a system that the Attorney General will not guarantee.

Let me tell you, Attorney General, that when the transcript isn't there, justice hasn't been served. Access to justice disappears. Not only does access to justice disappear, but the ability to appeal a conviction is lost.

What I want to know from you is whether you'll guarantee that this will not happen and whether you will personally—I say this and I don't mean to be funny, as your colleagues might think I mean to be, and I appreciate the fact that you told them it wasn't a funny question. But the fact is, what's going to happen to somebody who is in a situation where he or she can't appeal because the system has failed? What are you going to do about that? I want your personal guarantee, and so do the 700 people you are putting out of work, because they are the foolproof system, not your system.

Hon Mrs Boyd: The member is quite right. It is the responsibility of the Attorney General to ensure the integrity of the system, and that includes the availability of transcripts, and the ability of persons to appeal is very much ours. I accept that responsibility.

We will certainly not be putting into effect systems that do not have fail-safes, any more than we have now. The member is quite aware that even with personal recording now, there have been instances in which, because of fire or water damage and so on, that has happened, and because of the unavailability of a reporter. So that is a real concern. To the extent that it's ever possible, of course I would guarantee to the member that any system we would put in place, we would want to be very sure would work.

When the member talks about putting people out of

work, we are indeed moving in a direction that's quite different. These folks used to be itinerant people working on a fee-for-service basis. They never knew from one year to the next how much work they would get. What we have done is bring them into the civil service, where they have the protections of the contract, and we will be ensuring, through the protections of the contract, that as much security as possible is available to these people.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF BILL

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I move that notwithstanding standing order 96(h), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot item number 25.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

PETITIONS

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will enable government to unilaterally and arbitrarily restrict payments for psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality mental health care services across the province,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw the proposal to restrict payments for psychotherapy and withdraw the proposal to allow the cabinet to make decisions with respect to the number of times patients may receive particular insured services and set maximums with respect thereto.

"The government of Ontario must reaffirm its commitment to the process of joint management and rational reform of the delivery of medical services in the province as specified under the Ontario Medical Association-government framework agreement."

I agree with this petition and have affixed my signature.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I have a petition here from many residents in my riding, residents like Anna Cook, John and Dorine McHardy, Gloria and Larry Ostrom, John Weir and Ron Flintoff, and they, the undersigned, register their opposition in the strongest terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate

Sundays from the definition of "legal holiday" in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

They believe in the need for keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom.

"The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I affix my signature thereto.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I'm pleased to present a petition signed by scores of constituents throughout Renfrew county which reads in part:

"That the Ontario government immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty."

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. This petition is signed by 296 members of my riding of Sarnia and surrounding area. The petition calls on the government to reset its course to build a society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not to scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

It further calls on the government to respect the fundamental principles of free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services.

In order to comply with section 36(e) of our standing orders, which requires that members affix their signature to petitions, I have done so.

NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in 1923, seven Ontario bands signed the Williams Treaty, which guaranteed that native peoples would fish and hunt according to provincial and federal conservation laws, like everyone else; and

"Whereas the bands were paid the 1993 equivalent of \$20 million; and

"Whereas that treaty was upheld by Ontario's highest court last year; and

"Whereas Bob Rae is not enforcing existing laws which prohibit native peoples from hunting and fishing out of season; and

"Whereas this will put at risk an already pressured part of Ontario's natural environment,

"We, the undersigned, adamantly demand that the government honour the principles of fish and wildlife conservation, to respect our native and non-native ancestors and to respect the Williams Treaty."

That's signed by 248 people, and I affix my signature.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition to members of the provincial Parliament re amendments to the Retail Business Holidays Act, proposed wide-open Sunday shopping and elimination of Sunday as a legal holiday:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition to wide-open Sunday business.

"I believe in the need to keep Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society and will cause increased hardship on retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

That's signed by 222 constituents, and I've also signed my name.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a petition of 32 signatures from my riding of Dufferin-Peel from Orangeville, Shelburne, Caledon and Grand Valley. It's addressed to the Legislature of this province:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to the proposed amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for quality of life, religious freedom and for family time. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I have affixed my signature to this petition.

1500

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr Paul Wessinger (Simcoe Centre): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I'd like to read this petition into the record. It says:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardships on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): I have a petition signed by absolutely hundreds of residents of London North, in fact all of London. It is with regard to the amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, proposed wide-open Sunday shopping and elimination of Sunday as a legal holiday.

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I have signed the petitions and I support them.

GAMBLING

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

This is signed by 62 members of Murray Street Baptist Church, which is in my riding.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I have a petition for the members of the provincial Parliament re the amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, proposed wide-open Sunday shopping and the elimination of Sunday as a legal holiday:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition to wide-open Sunday business.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on retailers, retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, or Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

This petition is signed by literally hundreds of people from Algoma-Manitoulin.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition to members of provincial Parliament and it reads as follows:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest possible terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hard-

ship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

Mr Speaker, I support this petition. I voted against Bill 38. I would like to file it with you.

CASINO GAMBLING

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): I have a petition here with over 3,000 signatures and we're still counting. I haven't brought them all over here yet today. This was collected by the economic development agency in Niagara Falls from many different businesses within our city. It reads:

"We believe that the New Democratic government considered legalized gambling in Ontario to revitalize our recession-battered tourism industry and to provide employment.

"Each year, over 12 million visitors regularly visit our fine city. Of these 12 million visitors, it is estimated that over 70% of our tourists stay for only one day.

"We feel that one government-regulated casino would be an excellent attraction to retain tourists for longer periods.

"Increasing the percentage of overnight tourists would have a significant positive impact on the economy of Niagara Falls and the region, which would also contribute to the provincial government's increased revenue requirements.

"In summary, we believe one regulated gambling casino will provide much-needed employment, increase tourism for our existing hospitality industry, provide an immediate and lasting improvement of our local economy and provide much-needed revenue for the provincial government.

"We therefore strongly urge you to support the establishment of one government-regulated casino in Niagara Falls."

I urge the government to respond.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly. This indeed is another positive petition requesting Sunday be maintained as a legal holiday.

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38.

"We believe that this bill defies God's laws, violates the principles of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection to workers regarding when they must work and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province.

"The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man but dates from God's creation and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all

people, both physically and spiritually.

"We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

Signed by 111 residents from across Ontario, I affix my signature.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): I have another petition signed by literally hundreds of residents in the city of London and a few residents of the county of Middlesex. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I have signed this petition and support fully the concerns of the citizens who put their names on it.

1510

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (DIMENSIONS AND WEIGHT), 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (DIMENSIONS ET POIDS)

On motion by Mr Pouliot, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 74, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act / Loi modifiant le Code de la route.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Monsieur le Ministre, vous avez des commentaires ?

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): Quelques commentaires. Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Président.

This bill amends the Highway Traffic Act to bring maximum allowable dimensions of vehicles and combinations of vehicles into conformity with most North American jurisdictions.

This initiative, as you know, is indeed vital to Ontario's economic recovery. The benefits are significant. Ontario industries will save \$100 million annually in transportation costs. The competitiveness of our manufacturers, shippers and truckers will indeed improve and new industry will look more favourably at locating here in Ontario.

The Ministry of Transportation will begin issuing permits allowing 16.2-metre semitrailers and 25-metre double trailer combination vehicles immediately, right now.

As I have indicated—

The Deputy Speaker: Just a brief statement. Not a speech, a brief statement.

Hon Mr Pouliot: —this is primarily an economic initiative.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: For the introduction of bills, it is very clear there is to be a very brief description of the bill, not a ministerial statement. We ask—

The Deputy Speaker: Take your chair, please. You're totally correct and had you listened, you would have heard that I told the minister not to make a speech but to make a brief statement.

Minister, please make a brief statement.

Hon Mr Pouliot: In keeping with decorum and good manners, and by way of conclusion, as I have indicated, this is primarily an economic initiative. It will make our industries more competitive, it will make consumer goods cheaper, it will of course not compromise safety in any way and of course it will not cost taxpayers one penny more.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Can I ask the minister—the critics, I don't think, and I could be corrected, have received the compendium notes for this piece of legislation.

The Deputy Speaker: This is introduction of bills. I will verify if the compendium has been deposited. Has it been deposited?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Minister, has the compendium been deposited?

Hon Mr Pouliot: It's my understanding that all the courtesy and the rules have been adhered to meticulously. Everything has been mailed and has been mailed on time and I suspect, and I don't wish to impute motives—let's get on with it—you're just playing games.

Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I say this with all due respect. I'm not meaning to—

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): Trucking firms are going out of business in the province and you go through all this.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Stockwell: I'm certainly not looking to usurp the business of this province, but in the standing orders it says very clearly that compendium notes will be delivered previous to the announcement and we haven't received them. The only thing we've received from this ministry—

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): Check your mailbox, Chris.

Mr Stockwell: We did just check the mailbox of the critic's office and the only thing we've received is the press release. The orders are very clear.

The Deputy Speaker: Just wait for a minute. Let me check it out.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Minister, I will read something here and I'd like a reply from you. I'm referring to 38(c):

"On the introduction of a government bill, a compendium of background information shall be delivered to the opposition critics. If it is an amending bill, an up-to-date consolidation of the act or acts to be amended shall be delivered to the opposition critics unless the bill amends an act amended previously in the session."

Have you complied with this rule?

Hon Mr Pouliot: It is my understanding, with respect, Mr Speaker, that everything has been meticulously, if not religiously adhered to, one more time.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Please take your chair. I accept the statement.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I accept what the minister tells me. That's the end of it.

Mr Turnbull: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I am the Transportation critic. I checked with my office immediately before coming here. The only thing we have had delivered is the press release. There can be no other interpretation of this. We have only had the press release.

Mr Stockwell: Why do you say that when you know it is not true? This is the second time you have done it.

Hon Mr Pouliot: We will make you sign every piece of paper.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Minister, order, please. I accept what the minister has told me. I have no power of investigation whatsoever.

Mr Stockwell: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: A point of order—if it's on this point of order, I will not accept it. I accept the word of the minister. I have no power of investigation. That is the decision of the Chair.

Mr Stockwell: Can I just ask for a clarification, Mr Speaker? I understand that you took the word of the minister. As far as I understood what the minister said, it was very clear, as far as he understood. Now, I don't think that would give me—

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): Remember, he's an honourable member.

Mr Stockwell: And I say he's an honourable member, but all I would ask you as the Speaker to do is, considering the fact that he qualified his statement, could you ask the minister to simply check to see if in fact it's been done, because as our best information gives us, it has not been completed; it has not been done. Clearly the minister doesn't seem to know one way or the other by his qualification to the answer to the question that you put.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. A point of order has been made. You can rest assured that if a mistake was made, the minister will recognize it and he will tell me so.

Hon Mr Pouliot: The member opposite—this is the first reading of a bill—brings a very interesting subject matter to the front. I will assure you, Mr Speaker, briefly, that not a document will reach the members opposite without an affidavit to accompany it so we have certification, for it is the second time that this kind of travesty has been allowed to take place in this House.

Mr Turnbull: Point of order.

Mr O'Connor: Causing red tape.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Please, take your chair.

Mr Stockwell: We don't have them.

Mr Turnbull: We just got the press release. You know it. Maybe you don't know it because you are asleep.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The ruling of the Chair has been made. I accept the word of the minister. I will not entertain any other point of order on that issue. Orders of the day.

1520

On a point of order, the member for Sudbury.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Minister, you have a question, you have a point of order?

Hon Shelley Martel (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): I was going to call the order of the day. Perhaps before I do that, I've been checking with the House leader's staff and the minister's staff. My understanding is that the compendiums were delivered. They were brought into the House. There was no staff available from the opposition parties to pick it up. The information is available from our members who have been holding it in the back, behind the Speaker's dais. Perhaps we can—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Chair has ruled. There's no point in coming up and debating it again. I have ruled and as far as I'm concerned, that is the end of the question.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House in committee of the whole.

**ONTARIO TRAINING AND
ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993**

**LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL ONTARIEN
DE FORMATION ET D'ADAPTATION
DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE**

Consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

The Chair (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Before we proceed, I would like to read the following:

That, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House, in relation to Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, the period of time following routine proceedings when Bill 96 is called as the first order of business until 5 pm on that same sessional day, shall be allotted to further consideration of the bill in committee of the whole House. All amendments proposed to be moved to the bill shall be filed with the Clerk of the assembly by 4 pm on the sessional day on which the bill is considered in committee of the whole House. Any divisions required during clause-by-clause consideration of the bill in the committee of the whole House shall be deferred until 5 pm on this sessional day. At 5 pm on this sessional day those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved and the Chair of the committee of the whole House shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto and report the bill to the House. Any divisions required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put, the members called in once and all deferred divisions taken in succession.

Hon Shelley Martel (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): Mr Chair, if I might, I would request that the parliamentary assistant be allowed to sit at the front and also that staff be permitted on the floor to help him during this debate.

The Chair: Yes, we will wait for a few minutes.

Are there any questions, comments or amendments? If so, to which sections of the bill?

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I move that clauses 1(a) and (b) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

“(a) to facilitate development of a more knowledgeable, skilled and competitive labour force that would form the basis for wealth and job creation”—

The Chair: Just indicate the sections which you are planning to amend.

Mr Ramsay: Fine. My sections I propose to amend

would be clauses 1(a) and (b), subsections 9(2), (3) and (4) and section 18.

The Chair: Do you have any amendments?

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): Yes, I do, Mr Chair. I have a number of amendments, if you can bear with me here. I'm going to be moving an amendment to subsection 9(2) with regard to the board of directors.

The Chair: Just the section.

Mrs Cunningham: Just the section? Subsection 9(4.1). Subsection 12(3). We have an additional amendment to section 18. Section 21. Clauses 30(1)(a) and (b), with the regulations. Clause 30(1)(k), regulations; subsection 30(2), again the regulations, and 31, standing committee review.

The Chair: We will now entertain questions or comments to clauses 1(a) and (b).

Mr Ramsay: Thank you, Chair. I take it you'd like me to move the amendment then on the record.

I move that clauses 1(a) and (b) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

“(a) to facilitate the development of a more knowledgeable, skilled and competitive labour force that would form the basis for wealth and job creation;

“(b) to enable business and labour, together with educators, trainers and representatives of under-represented or disadvantaged groups, to play a significant role in the design and delivery of appropriate labour force development programs and services;

“(i) to give Ontario's employers, workers and potential workers access to publicly funded labour force development programs and services that will, in the context of the competitive Canadian and global economies and in the context of a fair and just society, lead to the enhancement of skill levels, productivity, quality, innovation and timeliness and the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals.”

This is really the heart of this bill. Clauses 1(a) and (b) are really the purpose clauses of this bill that start to lay out the purpose of the establishment of OTAB and why the government wants to embark down this path.

I'm very, very concerned about the establishment of these purposes because I think everybody in the province would agree that the establishment of some sort of mechanism that would bring the different labour force partners together is a very good idea. In fact, it was Premier David Peterson's Premier's Council that brought together for the very first time in Ontario representatives of labour and business, academia and government to see how we could solve these skill-training problems of the future. This was quite a few years ago now, about five years ago, and it's taken this

government a while to start to bring this together.

What concerns me very much when you look at these purposes is that this government, in writing out these purpose clauses, has really started to confuse values with purposes, because what we have here is a bunch of mush, in fact. It's very loose. It isn't very succinct and it isn't very direct. What's really missing in this bill is a vision of why we would want to bring all the labour force partners together in order to work towards developing the Ontario economy.

That's why in my amendment I've made, on the first part, on (a), the relatively small change but I think very significant change that it's not just to facilitate the development of a more knowledgeable and skilled and competitive labour force but that also, and I go on, it would form the basis of wealth creation and job creation. I think we have to put right up front in this bill what the bill is about and why we're really embarking on redesigning a whole new bureaucracy in order to bring all the players in the labour force together and to be partners.

That's not there, and I don't know why the parliamentary assistant in this case and the minister whose name is attached to this bill would not make that certainly simple change to say that, yes, it's to facilitate the development of a more knowledgeable and skilled and competitive labour force, as he has in this bill, but that the reason we're doing this is that we are trying to form a base for wealth and job creation, because that's really what we're about here.

What we're trying to do is, in this very rough transition of the Ontario economy that we see ourselves in now, where really we're seeing a province of workers who, with the new work of the future, are a little bit underskilled, if you will, is that we want to bring everybody together. That's a good idea and I compliment the government on doing that, but for what purpose? What's the vision? I think that needs to be there. I'd be happy to hear the comments of the parliamentary assistant.

1530

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): I'm pleased to begin the debate on the amendments that are being brought forward in this committee of the whole. As the critic from the opposition party has pointed out, the purpose clause does set out why this legislation exists. I think we presented it in a very balanced way to highlight what it is we're trying to achieve in it. I would say it is visionary in the best sense of that word, that it does aim to include the labour market partners in designing and developing the training programs they will be benefiting from. I think that is where the underlying or the main focus is for this legislation, that it will include employers and workers and potential workers in coming together to decide on the kinds of training programs they will need.

Certainly, there's been a lot of work in the province already done in the training field, and what we're doing by bringing the programs together under the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board is to build on that experience in a way that we think will improve it. The improvement comes from including the labour market partners in more of the decision-making. As you know, it will be a consumer-led focus, and we think it's very important to bring them around the table to come up with the programs that are needed.

So while the critic from the opposition has suggested what he sees as a sharper focus, I think when you look at the four parts of the purpose section together, you'll find that they do speak very directly to the ability to get the province back to work. Again, when you look at it in context, you'll see that the way it's done is the important thing that's being highlighted; that is, by bringing the labour market partners together to make sure that the programs that are designed, that they will be designing, that they will be evaluating and working on, will meet their needs.

Mr Ramsay: I really have to disagree with the parliamentary assistant, because in all four of the purposes that are laid out in the purpose clauses, section 1 of this bill, there really isn't that sort of hard vision of what this bill's about: that it should be about redeveloping the economy, creating highly skilled workers so that we can get job creation and the generation of wealth so that we could support the social programs that we all care for very much.

We look at clause 1(a) in the bill. Again, it's confusing values with purposes. They're good values, and they should be put elsewhere in the bill, maybe in a preamble, to talk about the values that we all believe in. It's not that I don't believe in these values; I think the values are sound. But you need to go one step more, one more step forward, to say why the imposition of these values is important and what we're going to get out of it.

The first purpose of this bill is "to enable business and labour, together with educators, trainers and representatives of underrepresented or disadvantaged groups, to play a significant role in the design and delivery of labour force development programs and services." If that's the number one purpose of this bill, then I think we're wasting our time. That's a laudable value and it should be there, but number one, right up front should be "to facilitate the development of a more knowledgeable, skilled and competitive labour force that would form the basis of wealth and job creation."

Let's put that number one. Let's put the reason we're here: that what we're trying to do is to bring all the partners together so we create something strong and with direction and with vision, to make sure we get all Ontarians who are able to work working, and working at work of high value and high pay, because that's what

we all want. That's your number one goal there, just to make sure everybody's represented. A good goal, a good value, but that shouldn't be number one up there.

Then, number two you have "to give Ontario's employers, workers and potential workers access to publicly funded labour force development programs and services that will, in the context of the competitive Canadian and global economies and in the context of a fair and just society, lead to the enhancement of skill levels, productivity, quality, innovation and timeliness and the improvement of lives of workers and potential workers."

Again, it's great stuff, but we don't get to the point, I say to the parliamentary assistant, of why we want to accomplish that. Where does this lead us to? Sure, we want to make sure everybody has the input, to make sure we raise the school levels of all Ontarians so that we can become innovative and productive, and obviously we want to improve the lives of workers and potential workers, but let's get to the point: We want to create jobs. Why do we want to do this? We want to do this so we can create jobs in Ontario, so that people are productive and are happy about what they do and can be productive workers, paying taxes that help support the social programs we all want.

The other change I have in this amendment, which is really an addition to what we have here in the legislation, is under subclause 1(b)(i). In my last two lines, I bring to the attention of the parliamentary assistant, is that why we want to be doing this is a little more realistic. We want to make sure that, in the improvement of lives of workers and potential workers, we do that by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals.

There's no point in giving any false expectation that this bill is going to improve the lives of workers and potential workers. That's certainly a goal, we'd like to do that, but I think also we need to be making sure that we're realistic in our assessment of what we're trying to do here, realistic in what we want the partners to do; that is, to sit down with workers—and as you know, half of this is not just training but adjustment—and in that adjustment for workers who probably find themselves out of work, to make sure we give counsel in a realistic way, so we don't raise the expectations of people that they're going to be able to accomplish work or accomplish goals and training and skills beyond their level. What I'm talking about is helping people to identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals so that we keep the world of realism attached to this legislation.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think in the critic's description of the benefits of the changes he's suggesting, he included much of what I would say are the benefits or the qualities that exist in our legislation. He quoted one section in particular, under clause 1(b). We see these

programs developing in a way that will "lead to the enhancement of skill levels, productivity, quality, innovation and timeliness and the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers." Those qualities I think speak very directly to the wealth creation that would follow from those skills and abilities that workers would have.

Again, we see the purpose of the bill very clearly setting out what it is that we're trying to achieve through OTAB in a very balanced and inclusive way.

Secondly, I would like to say, as far as his second amendment about "realistic" personal development is concerned, that we have to be careful, in using that word, that it doesn't become a bit patronizing, as though somebody knows what is realistic for somebody else. One of the chief values or benefits of the way OTAB has been developed is that it very much includes the people to immediately recognize what is realistic and what isn't. After all, if you're unemployed because you don't have certain skills or if your job disappears and you realize that you have to take adjustment programs, clearly realism is very immediate and forceful. So I think that adds nothing to the way the legislation is set out. By including the labour market partners in the decisions, in the design of the program, a great element of realism will be brought to the programs.

Mrs Cunningham: I think what's happening here is that the government is coming up with excuses not to accept some of the thoughtful recommendations that were put forward by members of the public who took the time to come before the committee. In the words of the government, this has been one of the most broad consultative processes that anyone has experienced in the province of Ontario. I think there are people who consult and listen and act, there are those who consult and don't listen, and there are those who, at worst, consult, don't listen and don't act. What we've got here is the worst scenario.

1540

We have brought forth 20-some-odd recommendations, and I think my colleague from the Liberal caucus brought forth maybe 10 or more during the clause-by-clause in committee. The government chose to accept one Liberal recommendation for change—it was its own; it just changed the number on it—and two of its own, which were housekeeping, so I don't think I have to speak to this process right now, as I begin this debate, and say it was meaningless. I said it from the beginning.

It's too bad. I think we could have made up for a process where people spent hours and weeks preparing briefs to present to the government committee when they were not listened to in their local hearings. I think they at least were listened to by the committee in the public hearings here at Queen's Park, in the standing committee, but if no one takes any action as a result of

good recommendations, what's the purpose? Quite frankly, I think the government hasn't spent the time on this, and I think the arguments that I've heard so far with regard to this recommendation are meaningless.

I'd like to speak in favour of my colleague's recommendation for change in this amendment, to say that the OTAB business steering committee was formed I don't know how many months ago, but perhaps a couple of years now when we take a look at the time it's taken to get to this point in the legislation. The government, by the way, likes to blame the opposition members for this, and I'd like to say that nothing's happened since the very first public consultation some two years ago. Nothing has changed as a result of it. So don't blame us, blame yourselves.

Some 13 months ago—I suppose this would have been now almost 20 months ago—a business steering committee was formed in order to input into the consultation process and to coordinate the activities of the business community, basically so that it could have some kind of consensus over the areas of the legislation it wanted to put its amendments to. As today we are not putting forward all of our amendments, I can tell you the business community didn't either. It was made up of some 12 major business organizations, including the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto and the Retail Council of Canada. These are groups within their own group that have to have some kind of consensus when they're coming before committees and making presentations to any level of government.

They argued that in its present form Bill 96 fails to recognize that wealth creation is needed to achieve the bill's objectives and that it tries to be all things to all people. I think I can clearly state that when we first started to talk about the concept of an Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, it was as a result of the Premier's Council report, *People and Skills in the New Global Economy*. That's where it started; this government didn't start it. I think it's probably been a matter of public discussion for over seven years. A tremendous amount of thoughtful work went into the preparation, I think, of the recommendations of this Premier's Council report. You should know that there was a very focused concept for OTAB in the beginning, but over time I think this focus has enlarged to the point that right now OTAB unrealistically is trying to be all things to all people.

What they've really missed, I believe, in both the purpose part of the bill, which we're talking about now in section 1, and later on where we made amendments before—but we won't bother now because we don't think the government will listen—in section 4, which is the objects part, is that right now they're trying to do too many things.

If you need a focus, I have to tell you that the focus of training people for work must be recognized as the end result to create wealth and provide jobs and provide workers who can in turn pay taxes so that in fact we can support the system of government we have here and now in Ontario. In order to do it fairly and so that we don't have an unrealistic burden on the next generation, we have to do two things: We have to spend what we have and not go into debt, and we have to, secondly, make sure that people have jobs, so to recognize that wealth creation is needed to achieve the objectives of Bill 96 is extremely important.

Clause 1(a) recognizes that in order to prosper in the future, Ontario will need a competitive Ontario workforce that will form the basis for wealth and job creation. I can't imagine the government objecting to that, and yet it just did. Clause 1(b) very simply adds the term "appropriate" immediately preceding the phrase "labour force development programs." What's wrong with that? One word: "appropriate labour force development programs."

It's been made clear, and we certainly have a track record in Ontario, that no one is interested in training for the sake of training. People are interested in training that leads to employability and active participation in society. A very simple amendment; you could stand up today and agree with it, say, "Yes, we agree with the word 'appropriate.'" We heard it from more than one presenter in the committee hearings. If you believe in committee hearings, let's for heaven's sake listen to them.

Subclause 1(b)(i) deals with the most unrealistic aspect of the bill as outlined in the purposes clauses, and in its current form Bill 96 is expected to improve the lives of workers and potential workers. The criticism has been from some of the members of the government in the debate as well that they are very concerned that instead of focusing on training and jobs and competitiveness this bill is trying to do all things for all people.

In our opinion, as this business steering committee says, and I'm quoting them, "This is too broad a mandate for a bill which is established strictly to address publicly funded training for workers and potential workers who are interested in training in order to be able to participate in and contribute to the competitive economy in a meaningful way." They go on to state that although access to OTAB-funded programs and services will lead to improving the lives of some workers and/or potential workers, it will certainly not improve the lives of all workers and/or potential workers.

And so the new wording that has been put forward qualifies "improve the lives of workers and potential workers" by adding the phrase "helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic

goals," so that we can tell them exactly how we're going to do it so that there is no misunderstanding.

Unfortunately, I have to tell you that I have people in my office all the time, as do other colleagues in this House, telling me that they thought just because they were in a training program they were going to improve their quality of life and get a job.

Some of them are now signing contracts with our colleges and they actually think they're all going to get a job and their life will improve. We cannot lead them to believe that by not clarifying this purpose in this bill.

We've given you an opportunity to do it. It isn't just my colleague in the Liberal Party's idea; it was put forward by a number of persons who came before the committee. It's very discouraging for me to participate in this process where, one by one, our amendments that are put forward on behalf of the public we serve are just ignored by the government with no true debate or reason that can be acceptable or understood by anybody.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to this amendment. I'm very disappointed that no one is listening to the public.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm sorry. I'm very disappointed that the critic from the third party suggests we're not listening and, as she said herself and as we have said in the past—she didn't seem to disagree—there has been a large consultation on this. We have had our own paper, *Skills to Meet the Challenge*, which, as you remember, was put out many months ago and elicited a lot of comment and in fact forms the basis along with the work that was done, and which I mentioned in my first submission, that we are building on the training process that has existed in Ontario in the past.

But what we're trying to achieve here is a training culture where people will feel easy about taking programs, even while they're working, before they lose a job for whatever reason, that they will feel comfortable in entering a training program so that they will foresee or take the step that will be necessary to find a job that will be more suitable to them.

It is this training culture that we're trying to get, and I'm worried that we're going to place too much emphasis on or see OTAB as a job creation program in itself. It is not that. We have other programs, other Jobs Ontario programs that will lead to the creation of jobs, but what we are expecting from OTAB, again, by bringing together the labour market partners will be to design the training and adjustment programs that will suit workers.

The thing about what has been done through the Premier's Council report, we think that we've built on that but modified it to include more people. I think it is important that we try to include everybody in Ontario, give everybody a voice, and that has been one of the challenges that I think we've met successfully, that if

you look at groups in isolation, sure, there are things in there that they're not going to like or changes they would like to see that would suit them perhaps more directly, but when you look at the other groups and see what the change would mean to them, they're not so supportive of it.

We've ironed a lot of this out through the consultation that went on before the legislation was drafted and we think the drafting of the legislation captures that consultation and the essence of what the consultation arrived at as far as accommodating the various groups that will benefit from OTAB.

1550

I think that is the important thing to see. The committee hearings certainly, I would say, taken as a whole, supported that approach that when you had people come to you outlining their point of view—and it wasn't only business; labour too had its concerns and the other labour partners had concerns about specific parts of the bill—when it was explained to them why it was written the way it was, to include the views of others, they had to acknowledge there was a different point of view.

Again what we're trying to achieve here is to bring the people who are most affected by the training and adjustment needs to design the programs that will benefit them. We think that that is the clearest and the most beneficial way of arriving at the programs that we'll need.

Mrs Cunningham: I'm not going to dwell on this except to say that it's the parliamentary assistant who mentioned the November 1991 release—I'm not sure he gave the date but I'll give it to him—of the discussion paper *Skills to Meet the Challenge: A Training Partnership for Ontario*, which underlined his government's preferred approach for the composition and structure of OTAB. We know that steering committees were set up in January 1992, so we're more than some 18 months later right now, and I would challenge him to take a look at the consultations and the recommendations.

What we're saying today fits in with a number of recommendations as a result of those consultations. The response of the government does not fit in with the concerns that were put forward by the public. We were just trying to help them along to be more inclusive and to clarify where we felt clarifications were needed. So I don't want to be lectured on listening, because I think that's my responsibility and the government's as well, and in this instance it hasn't.

He likes to talk about labour as well. We'll be talking about amendments that were put forward by labour, a majority of the labour people today as well, and we're talking about both. I'm not trying to centre out one group over another. It takes everybody to make this system work; no one knows that better than those of us who have been working on this for over 15 years, and in some communities they work better than others. If all

communities worked well, we wouldn't have to be here right now, coming up with some form of legislation for the province of Ontario.

I do want to take this opportunity to put on the record some of the additional concerns which I wasn't going to mention until the parliamentary assistant stood up and lectured me again—quietly lectured me, I should add. I just want you to know that with regard to the objects section of the bill, there were a couple of areas in there that he referred to and I just wanted to correct him on one. It's with regard to OTAB being an instrument for introducing social change. There was great concern with regard to that, and although I'm speaking about objects, I am speaking to these amendments as well because both sections kind of meld together in some way. They're not totally understandable.

It showed up later that the objects that were referred to in the bill itself were there to improve "the lives of workers and potential workers." Now, we hope that will happen and we think that to say, as in paragraph 4(1)5 here, "...in the context of the competitive Canadian and global economies and in the context of a fair and just society, lead to the enhancement of skill levels,"—which is extremely important—"productivity,"—which is extremely important—"quality,"—which is very important—"innovation and timeliness..." and that is what you were talking about when you talked about, at the beginning of that section, development of programs and services.

We did not feel that we should be getting either—section 4, that relates back to section 1, and we don't think it had to be said again in section 1 where you talk about "the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" when you're already saying "the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" in the objects section of the bill. There should be a distinction between those two sections.

That's all I'd like to add. I thought that was pretty good advice, but to say it both under the purposes and objects of the bill—all we wanted to do was take those words out of the purposes and put them in the objects. The minister could have advised that we do it the other way around.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to follow up on this a little bit also, and I'd like to read into the record part of the presentation made by Rony Israel, the general manager of Skill Dynamics Canada—as you know, parliamentary assistant, a new arm's-length agency of IBM that's really the training organ of that company.

I would just like to talk a little bit about what he said and then sum it up in my own words, because what I think this bill suffers from is what you admitted just in your last speech, in that you tried to please everybody and that's why it's so fuzzy. That's why I think we've come up with something that's just so mushy it doesn't please anybody. I guess what I will come back to is that

I think there needs to be more of an imperative in this piece of legislation, just like there needs to be more of an imperative from this government to get Ontario back to work again.

Rony Israel says that—number one of a few of his suggestions is: "Add a strong statement of OTAB's vision to the purposes clause, for example;" and these are his words now, "an Ontario with the most effective highly skilled" knowledge workers "in the world, that makes Ontario an attractive home for investment in knowledge-based work." Again, another goal of OTAB that's missing in the bill.

"Clarify OTAB's mission statement. Replace words such as 'give access' with action-oriented phrases such as 'drive change.'" That's what's needed in this; there's not the action orientation in this bill. I can just see this table and everybody holding hands and we're all going to get together and we're going to decide what the skills are we need for Ontario, rather than a real, action-oriented agency of this government to drive change, to rebuild this economy, and that's what's needed.

"OTAB exists to foster high value added workplaces and should be accountable for its success in its upgrading skill levels. Remove the words," and I included these, but he says, "Remove the words, 'improve the lives of workers and potential workers,' because he says, "I don't think it's realistic to hold OTAB accountable for this broad mandate." And possibly it isn't; I tried to share in some of the values that the government brought forward and keep that in.

He says: "To turn the third and fourth purposes into statements of principles. For example, 'OTAB is founded on the fundamental principles of access and equality. OTAB recognizes and supports Ontario's linguistic duality and the diversity and pluralism of Ontario's population.' These values and principles will guide its operations consistent with the economic and social policies of the Ontario...." These are the guidelines but not necessarily the purposes of the bill.

I want to get back to the word "imperatives," because when you look in the history of mankind, when mankind really leapfrogged into the future and made some tremendous progress, it became some sort of imperative. If you look at our recent history there are different sorts of imperatives. If you look at Japan after the Second World War it was obviously an economic imperative that drove that country to come together and to rebuild its economy, because basically it was totally flattened, literally and figuratively, and so the world came together to rebuild that economy. That country understood what it had to do, so it was an economic imperative.

You look at other ones. Look at the Manhattan Project to build the A bomb: not a project that we're all actually very proud of, obviously, in this world, but a military imperative. Again, basically it was a directive

that was given in the United States to one group of people there, scientists and that army, to come up with something. There was a goal; it was a weapon in that case. That was a military imperative.

If you look at more peaceful purposes, the Apollo Project to put mankind on the moon: There was a political imperative. Again, an order given from vision and from a goal in a country to challenge the people to come up with that result. I'm saying to you, that's what this legislation has to have. There should be a strong goal and a strong vision of the result of where we want Ontario to be, that we want Ontario to be a place of highly skilled workers doing high-value work in high-value and high-paying jobs, so that we're prosperous and we can support the social structure in this province that we all care for and helped build. That's what we want and that's sort of the tough, more action-oriented words, rather than this fuzzy stuff, that I'd like to see in this bill.

The Chair: Parliamentary assistant?

Mr Gary Wilson: I want to make it clear that it wasn't I who said it was going to be everything to everybody. I think that was both critics from the opposition.

Mrs Cunningham: The bill says it.

1600

Mr Gary Wilson: I find that the "we" that the critic from the official opposition just used is even fuzzier than anything that we have in the legislation. After all, who is the "we" that he's talking about in that case? He seems to assume that "we," I guess, includes everybody.

What we've done is identify the labour market partners based on the experience of training in the province for the last, say, 100 years. The question is what we did hear in the committee. The critic for the third party wants to talk about the fact that we weren't listening. What we did hear very clearly was, "Let's get moving with this." Submission after submission ended with that, that we've talked about this long enough.

There's a lot of agreement that the training process in our province has to be improved, and that is what we're trying to do. We're trying to improve the labour and adjustment programs in the province. We've come up with legislation that certainly is based on wide consultation and has a lot of agreement among the labour market partners, and we want to proceed with it.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I have a couple of questions related to the purpose clause, although it ties in with others. As I think has been identified, they're related.

To the parliamentary assistant: I met today with members of Frontier College and yesterday with some members of the Coalition for Social Assistance Reform. One of the questions that came up was the proposed reform in the welfare system and the Job Link ideas

contained in that and the notion that there perhaps be some obligation. Perhaps voluntary training would be required in order to have access to additional funds on social assistance as redesigned.

The question I have is, what is the role of this OTAB in relation to those training programs? How is it going to be tied in to the social assistance reform and the network there? Will this OTAB in fact have a role in those programs? Will individuals who are on training in the Job Link context be able to have access to this board?

I noticed it's not mentioned in either the purpose or objects, specifically in terms of that being an under-represented group, for example. They're certainly potential workers, it seems to me. They're also certainly not included in the membership of OTAB, and so I have a question related to exactly how this bill interacts with the Job Link programs under the social assistance reform.

The other is literacy. As I mentioned, I met with a representative of Frontier College, and he raised the particular concern about how literacy was going to play into this OTAB program. I am concerned that literacy isn't mentioned here. I understand this is meant to be an administrative scheme that is going to assist in the development of the programs and not necessarily the method by which those programs—well, it is the method by which they may be created, but it isn't the actual creation itself. None the less, I am concerned that literacy isn't mentioned here.

It seems to me that certainly, given the transition from social assistance to the workforce and in many other circumstances, literacy and numeracy skills are fundamental blockages to success in the workforce. Removing them doesn't necessarily mean, as the critic for the third party said, getting a job, but it's certainly a significant barrier.

It concerns me that this isn't mentioned here and, in addition, that there doesn't seem to be, on its face, a role for those non-governmental agencies like Frontier College or East End Literacy, both of which service the riding of St George-St David. Those groups aren't mentioned specifically here, and I'm wondering how it is that you envision the board playing a role with those kinds of groups and encouraging literacy programs.

Mr Gary Wilson: I appreciate the questions from the member for St George-St David. Certainly we recognize the importance of getting people on social assistance back to work and the benefits that flow from it, both personally and to the province at large: personally, the self-esteem that comes from supporting themselves and the opportunity to participate in the workplace and to progress to various jobs that will benefit them, as I say, directly; but also the provincial benefit will be that of course they're no longer on social assistance, but producing and being productive members

of the workforce and contributing their efforts and their taxes.

So it is something we've considered, of course. At this stage it is still being worked out how OTAB will work out with the program as it's envisaged in the reform of the social assistance program. OTAB may run the programs at this point, but, as I say, it's still too early to give a definitive answer. They are being worked out now.

As for the literacy programs, it's intended that they will be transferred to OTAB in clear recognition of, as the critic from the third party said as well, and I think we all recognize, the importance of literacy and numeracy skills not only in the workplace but in society at large, which again speaks directly to the improvement of the lives of workers.

Mr Murphy: If I may follow up on that, I wonder if I could ask the parliamentary assistant, in those deliberations related to whether or not the administration of the programs under Job Link will be transferred to OTAB, if they are transferred, whether there will be a change in the representation, for example—there are directors to represent those groups—whether there'll be some consideration of whether or not groups representing people on social assistance will be added to OTAB either in a formal or informal way; secondly, in terms of the transfer of the literacy, whether there will be a consultation with the literacy groups that are out there, that are not governmental groups, as to how that is going to be worked out and how it is intended they're going to be administered, and whether the granting authority for their grants will be transferred to OTAB as well.

Mr Gary Wilson: At this point, as I say, it is preliminary and they are being worked out, but no change in the directors is anticipated, partly because the labour market partners themselves are expected to reflect the view of Ontarians at large. It's not expected that they can bring to the board table simply the views of the groups that nominate them, but they have to go beyond that. We're looking for very inclusive representation of the needs of all Ontarians. We think we've come up with that balance that will lead to it.

Again, we had intense discussion at the committee stage of the legislation just to try to arrive at the appropriate level of representation. I think it's clear that we need to cut off the number at some point because it can become unwieldy if there are too many. But, at the same time, you need that representation that will include not only the labour market partners but give them the opportunity to speak to the views of all Ontarians. I think we have found that.

At this point, as I say, it's expected that the representation that's there now will be able to represent the views of all Ontarians. It's summarized in the phrase "the potential workers."

The Second Deputy Chair (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Further debate? Further discussion on the amendments?

Shall Mr Ramsay's amendment to clauses 1(a) and (b) carry?

All those in favour please say "aye."

All those opposed please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, on a point of order: So we can move more quickly, could we stack the votes at the end and then just vote on all the amendments at 5 o'clock?

The Second Deputy Chair: I want to remind the honourable member that votes can be stacked but you still have to have five members stand in order to stand down the vote.

Mrs Cunningham: Even if the government agrees?

The Second Deputy Chair: If indeed it agrees, then the government would have to have members stand to make sure there are five members. We have five members; therefore, the vote will be stacked till 5 o'clock.

Are there any amendments to sections 2 through 8? If not, shall sections 2 through 8 carry as presented? Agreed.

We now move to section 9. The honourable member for Timiskaming.

1610

Mr Ramsay: I move that subsections 9(2), (3) and (4) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"(2) There shall be 25 directors appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, as follows:

"1. Two co-chairs, one representing business and one representing labour.

"2. Seven directors representing business.

"3. Seven directors representing labour.

"4. Five directors representing educators and trainers"—this is the substantive change here.

"5. One director representing francophones.

"6. One director representing persons with disabilities.

"7. One director representing racial minorities.

"8. One director representing women.

"(3) Each director shall be nominated by organizations representing the group that the director is to represent.

"(4) In the selection of directors, the following matters shall be recognized:

"1. The importance of ensuring that the representation of business and labour reflect the diversity of the business and labour communities, especially with respect to business size and affiliation with labour

organizations.

"2. The importance of reflecting Ontario's linguistic duality and the diversity of its population.

"3. The importance of ensuring overall gender balance."

There are really two substantive changes that I have brought forward in this amendment to subsections 9(2), (3) and (4). I'd like to just address the one now for clarity of the discussion, and that would be the five directors representing educators and trainers. We just might concentrate on that for a second, and maybe I'll just alert my colleague from London North that I'm going to concentrate on the educators, then we'll go to the other representatives and how we decide on who should be representing business and labour.

First of all, I must commend the government for deciding that the OTAB should be consumer-driven. That's right. That's what really should happen. It should be basically that employers and workers should have the balance of power here and I accept that. I believe my amendment doesn't destroy that principle or in any way destroy the balance that has been struck by the government in trying to bring that principle forward.

Certainly, even my proposal of adding two more educators to the board of directors would not destroy the balance or the power, especially, as we talked about in committee, if we move the voting mechanism to another mechanism to ensure that labour and employers still rule the day when it comes to voting.

I think it's very important, as we're talking about training, that the people who deliver the training be on board. I think it's important that all the different types of trainers be on board and, in this case, be on the board of OTAB. To exclude any two of the training community, I think—actually, any three, as this legislation does; it excludes three of the five different types of educators and trainers in the province that are recognized as so—is wrong.

I think it's very important that we don't tip the balance of power, which is very important, that the government wants and I agree with, by having the other three training and educating partners at the table. As I see it, Chair, and to the parliamentary assistant, I think all the partners in education and training are going to be needed to embark upon this goal of basically retraining Ontario, because I think that's what OTAB's about. It's about retraining the workers of the province of Ontario, as we're all going to upgrade our skills in order to accomplish the new work of the future, that work that's higher valued and hopefully higher paid.

I think it's important that, rather than just having these subgroups where the other three educators are going to be informed of what's going on at OTAB, they be full partners in that. Again, if we make sure it doesn't tip the balance of power and they don't have

that voting power but are there from day one on those discussions, I think it's very, very important and I would really plead with the parliamentary assistant to make sure all the educators are represented, as they should be, with business and labour on this board.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you to the critic from the official opposition. That is something, of course, that we've given a lot of thought to. As he pointed out, though, at the beginning of his remarks, it is a consumer-driven process to make sure that is recognized, and I think that it works out in practice is the reason for the makeup of the board that we've arrived at.

I want to point out too that there is a reference group that will be there to supply advice to the two directors from the educator-trainer sector. I should say too that even with the higher numbers from the other groups, that still doesn't represent each aspect or each part of the sector that they will be nominated from, so there still has to be this process of being sensitive to the needs, first of all, of the sector they represent, but also of the broader sector, the province as a whole.

As I say, the goal in the way the board has been struck is that they will represent the interests of Ontario at bottom, and that's what we've set out. The two things then: The consumer-driven aspect, which gives more representatives to the people who need the training and adjustment programs and, secondly, the idea that all of Ontario's interests will be represented by the board through the use of reference groups.

Mr Ramsay: I have to ask the parliamentary assistant what the problem is with bringing on the additional directors for education if you make sure the voting mechanism ensures that it's still consumer-driven, because that's really what we want to do. I'm not going against the principle of having it consumer-driven; you just make sure that the power still is with those consumers, the workers and the employers. What I worry about is that there's a tremendous diversity between those educators and trainers.

To list them, we've got the universities, the colleges, we've got the school boards, and then we've got the community trainers and the private trainers. They're all very different and they all fill different parts of the puzzle in training in Ontario. I think they all should be there because they all have very different clients.

Since OTAB is for training and adjustment, we're going to have a wide range of clients there, and I think the employers and labour need to know, first of all, to become educated themselves as to traditionally how the different trainers have dealt with all these different clients out there, and then to work in partnership with labour and employers and business and how we can accomplish more of this in the future.

Community trainers deal with a very different person and client than, say, a university does, and so for

community colleges to private trainers, and also school boards, which primarily deal with our children and adults getting their secondary school education. They're a very diverse lot who deal with different people, and all very necessary in the training mix in Ontario. I'm just saying, what's wrong with having all five of them there as long as we don't tip the balance, so that the consumers have the power?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think the operative word here is "balance," and you risk upsetting that balance by including more of one particular group, partly because, again, through the discussions that we've had with the labour market partners, this is the formula that has been arrived at that they think will reach the kind of approach that is the consumer-driven approach that we're trying to achieve.

I think too that you're suggesting more of a separation, I guess, or barriers that exist among the labour market partners. There is an understanding, partly from the past experience of what training there is in the community. I think what we're trying to achieve here can be done through the present arrangement of the board in a very meaningful way.

Mrs Cunningham: The parliamentary assistant speaks with forked tongue. It's very simple that—

The Second Deputy Chair: Please, please.

Mrs Cunningham: That wasn't a derogatory remark, Mr Chair.

The Second Deputy Chair: It is not parliamentary language. I would like, please—

Mrs Cunningham: I'll withdraw it if it wasn't parliamentary, but there has to be another way of saying that he made the statement but it didn't support his own argument. That's all I really meant.

I'll give him an example. He talked about the labour market partners agreeing in advance with regard to a balance. He has to understand, and all of us were advised, that it was the business group that came to the conclusion that there would be some eight representatives, and the labour. But education never agreed to two members—never. Even in the working group, they never agreed to two members.

1620

Don't dissuade me from this argument, because it was made very clear during the presentations that education has always felt that it had to be represented fairly, and fairness is colleges, universities, definitely the school boards, and both the public and private sector trainers. Very clearly, they are the providers of training in this province. We've already had difficulty in the appointment of the two representatives to the board.

Unfortunately, it's been a very sad, I think, to put it mildly, process, because in fact at one point in time the school boards were not represented, and it would be very simple if we are really interested in having people

working together to include those five groups.

Now, I have to say that there is great concern in the province of Ontario with regard to the emphasis of this board on lifelong learning, with perhaps an exclusion of young people in our school systems. They really think that the government programs are going to be geared in the future to retraining programs more than they're going to be geared to supporting young people between the ages of three or four and compulsory school age 16 and beyond.

We've all recommended that young people get their secondary school graduation diplomas and we think that in today's world that is a priority. That is the age group that we have to focus on. Those young people in this country have a right to be the best education we can give them and the best training programs we can give them.

Unfortunately, now that the education community may or may not be—I'm now talking about boards of education—represented directly on the governing body, there is an indication by school boards and by parents that perhaps this government is only interested in retraining programs.

I would hope that if the parliamentary assistant has anything to say about what I've just said, he can stand up and assure us that that's not the case, and that then he can stand up and say he agrees with five representatives on the training board from the education community to support what he might try to reaffirm, because that's the only way that he will reaffirm it, and I would make that recommendation strongly.

I should also say in the interests of talking about process, that I think the great concern of the population and the people and citizens of Ontario, as they have lost confidence in their public institutions, I'm told—not in all members, I hope, who represent them, but in their public institutions as a whole—is that we don't listen. During the public consultation, I have to tell you, the makeup of the governing body was modified slightly as a result of the consultation process. Great. Give credit where credit's due. A francophone representative and a non-voting municipal representative have been added to the board. Give credit where credit's due.

But a very loud voice came to us and said, "The education community must have five seats," and this is the great opportunity of the government. If they don't like the working of the Liberal motion, we have one to follow; you can consider that.

Mr Gary Wilson: What appears to be our position of not liking the wording is simply that we think the way we have it set out is adequate for meeting the goals of OTAB, which I remind the critic from the third party is training—Ontario Training and Adjustment Board—so training clearly is one of the goals and one of the expected purposes that OTAB will serve.

The issue here isn't the weight of the voting, but it's how the groups are represented, and also where the emphasis lies, whether, again, it's consumer-driven, as the critic from the opposition party said, or whether it's provider-driven. The way it is clearly set out, it puts the emphasis on the consumer-driven nature of OTAB.

The second is that I've mentioned there is a reference group that will include people from all the constituents of the educator-trainer sector, and we must come back to the idea that the people on the board of directors, which will include two people from the educator-trainer sector, are there to represent the interests of all Ontarians.

On this issue of, what will be there for youth, it's quite clear that everyone who will be on that board will have some contact with youth, even their own experience, of course. They went through their own early years. Often they have children. I know that many of us have children and are very interested in their future, both in the educational system, as the critic from the third party said, and after. We want the programs that will serve them.

I think it's quite clear—we heard in the committee—that the training process we have now hasn't been working as well as it might. It can be improved. What we're doing is building on the past, using the experience of the past, which shows that the people who benefit or need the training and adjustment programs should have a large say in how they are designed and delivered, and this is what we are providing for in the makeup of the board of OTAB.

Mrs Cunningham: I would suggest that the parliamentary assistant has lost a wonderful opportunity. If he really thinks that the people who benefit should be represented, you should think of young students, and if you underline the word "training," you should know that the Oxford dictionary describes education as both knowledge and training. Young people who are well educated have an opportunity to learn, to expand their knowledge and to be trained. If you want to talk about improving the training systems in Ontario, we had better start with our young people.

If we want to start with our young people, all you have to do is go back, and for anybody in this House—I assume we can all count—it says two chairs, one representing business and one representing labour, seven directors representing business, seven directors representing labour—add those two chairs and you've got eight for labour, eight for business—and two directors representing educators and trainers. That says it all: eight, eight and two. That clearly sends a statement out to the public of Ontario, to the young people who are looking for these training programs, that they're not as important.

We're giving the government an opportunity—not ourselves, but the public who came before the commit-

tee. No one argued this point. But I was told that a deal was made before the public hearings between the business community and labour that this would be the makeup of the board. That's the way it goes, I guess, with this government.

That's what's wrong with this democratic process in this place, and it's been like this since I came here. I thought that the government, the NDP members who sat in opposition with myself on the committees when the Liberals were there and watched this happen then—and this is not an opportunity to poke at the Liberal Party, but it took place then. I wasn't here before, so I don't know what happened. If you want to moan about it, moan about it. But fix it, and you can fix it by changing it.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm surprised to hear the critic from the third party say she wasn't here before. That's the whole purpose of an educational system, to instruct us on matters of history. Not that you need that entirely. You can see the disadvantages of the former training system. So many people were left out.

Mrs Cunningham: This is history, unfortunately.

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, then you should know. If you know history, you should know the problems with the past. All I have to say is that we can see in the present surroundings the disadvantages of the present training system we have now, and a couple of speakers have mentioned other jurisdictions where they have similar systems to include the labour market partners as having the preponderant role in the education and training issues, because they're the ones who need it and they're most directly affected by what's there.

Secondly, it seems to me that it's a bit—what shall I say?—lacking in confidence, I think, in the labour market partners that they can't see these issues for themselves. As I say, they have gone through the system. They're aware of what has to be done, and that's why we're placing so much confidence in them. But secondly, they represent, they come out of communities all across this province and know the kinds of things that have to be done to get the communities back to work, and certainly being trained for the jobs that are available, that will become available, has to be done.

As I mentioned before, we think the education-training sector is well represented through the two directors they will have on the board, as well as the reference group that will be there to advise them. Secondly, we believe that the other directors will have the interests of the province at large uppermost in their minds when they make their decisions.

1630

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to move to the second substantive change in this particular subsection of the bill. That is the importance of ensuring that the representation of business and labour reflects the diversity of the business

and labour communities, especially with respect to business size and affiliation with labour organizations. I think this is one of the most contentious issues of the bill. I wanted to talk about that right now.

For OTAB to work, it is going to have to be credible, and to be credible it's going to have to have the respect of all the players in the labour market forces in Ontario. I don't think it's going to have that by the constitution of it as has been outlined in this bill, that is, that on the labour side, all the representatives have to be from organized labour in Ontario. As I've said many times in this House, we in this House all support, and in a sense most of us actually promote, the right of workers to organize and to build unions and locals in their unions to negotiate with employers for the benefit of their lives, to increase wages and to look for better benefits.

I think that's important, but for whatever reason, there are many sectors of the economy that don't find themselves well represented by unions, and because of that also, there are many regions of the province that don't find themselves represented by organized labour. It's for those sectors of the economy and those regions of the province that I sort of don't like this cookie-cutter approach.

For cities like Oshawa or Hamilton, it would absolutely make sense, obviously, that the majority of the workers in those areas are unionized, and it would make perfect sense, of course, that the majority of the worker reps on OTABs in those particular local boards be represented by union people, because they represent the majority of the workers in those areas. But Ontario as a whole is not like that and regions of the province aren't like that.

I'm just concerned that there are going to be people in different sectors who aren't going to feel they're represented there and people from different regions feeling that their type of work—and I'll use one example: agriculture, for instance. Agriculture, for whatever reasons, has not been one that has been organized—yet it's a very big part of our economy—and therefore won't have representation at OTAB. If there is a sector of the economy that obviously needs to be upgrading itself with skills, agriculture is one of those, so how will agriculture have a voice? I would just leave off this part of this discussion to the parliamentary assistant: How will agriculture have a voice in OTAB?

The Second Deputy Chair: Before the parliamentary assistant replies, I want to remind all members that we do have a 5 o'clock curfew on this committee of the whole.

Mr Gary Wilson: I am pleased to respond to the critic of the official opposition about the issue he has raised. He knows there was a lot of discussion in committee to think about or to investigate this question of the ability of organized labour to represent the

interests of all workers.

I think it was quite clear, as he said, that organized labour has represented the interests of unorganized workers through various ways; to be specific, on questions of social programs like medicare and like minimum wage and unemployment insurance that have affected all workers. I know from his reaction that he agrees with that.

The other thing, though, on the other hand, is that when you try to find the representation among the unorganized, I think we agreed that it was an oxymoron, because you can't have organized unorganized workers. The organization has to be there before they can be represented. Even in trying to find out how we could do it, it came down to, in one case, actually having management represent workers in a workplace; I agree we are just looking at possibilities, but that was where one effort ended up. Then the question is, how you get representation from the unorganized workers?—a question that was, as I say, unresolved by our committee.

But more positively, we did agree too, I think, that there is a strong record of organized labour representing the interests of all workers and there is a strong system of accountability there that we thought certainly covered that aspect. As I say, that was another issue that was raised during the consultations, and this is the arrangement that was arrived at.

Mr Ramsay: I certainly don't disagree with the parliamentary assistant. Organized labour can certainly represent the general wishes and desires and goals of working men and women, no doubt about it. What I'm concerned about is certain sectors that would just be absent from the table. I'd like to give a little concrete example, and then let's try to work through it.

You are proposing a local training and adjustment board that would include Hamilton, Brantford and Brant county, which is primarily agricultural. What we have are basically two big sectors of the economy: steelworking in Hamilton, and agricultural implement production in Brantford and agriculture itself in Brant county.

We're going to have big problems, obviously, in the steel industry. We see those there today. We need to get some adjustment and some skills training and upgrading in that particular sector. We're obviously going to be able to find some Steelworkers who are going to help us with that. They probably are one of the most advanced unions in Canada, with CSTEAC, the Canadian Steel Trades Employment Congress, in getting their people trained and retraining and adjustments. So we have no problem there.

What are we going to do with the problems that the agricultural community has in Brant county, which is going to be part of that LTAB, where we won't be able

to have a representative from the working side, when there are other affiliations, associations, where we certainly would be able to find some workers who represent that particular industry? How are they going to have a voice at the table? They're not in an organized union, but all working men and women have some sorts of groups or affiliations or associations where they keep in touch, where they educate each other and decide upon the interests of their particular type of work. What I want to know is, how in a real way is an LTAB like that going to work, that is going to have a problem in a sector where we're not going to have representation from the workers?

Mr Gary Wilson: As the critic from the official opposition knows, the LTABs haven't been established yet. OTAB has to be established so that we can have the consultation among the groups that will be looking at how local boards will be set up.

Although the legislation sets out that the local boards will be established, the exact representation, it's expected, will follow the modelling of OTAB. That will be what's followed with the local boards as well. I point out too that the members of those boards will also be expected to represent the interests of their communities. In fact, by allowing for community representation, we've gone the opposite way from the cookie-cutter approach you mentioned a little earlier; this is the exact opposite. As I say, the local boards will reflect the interests of their communities and the programs that will serve their interests will be arrived at.

Mr Ramsay: Very straightforwardly to the parliamentary assistant, how will a Steelworker know what skills an agricultural worker is going to need?

Mr Gary Wilson: I missed that question. Could you repeat it, please?

Mr Ramsay: You were saying the LTABs haven't been established as yet. I just wanted to ask you a direct question. When you're going to have some sort of mix, because you're only going to have about 22 of these LTABs around the province, how would a Steelworker understand what an agricultural worker is going to need as far as skills and retraining are concerned?

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, we've already pointed out that the organized workers are the most advanced when it comes to thinking about the issues that affect workers. I mentioned several of the programs, which you agreed to, that they've done. You mentioned that the Steelworkers are very advanced in training issues. There are elements of training that apply to all workplaces, and of course that's what this is based on. The question is that the people who are on the local boards, just as on the central board, will reflect the interests of everybody in their area. There will be the opportunity for consultation at the local level as there is at the provincial level to make sure that the programs that are arrived at will be suitable for the areas.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to give another example. Another sector of the economy that up to now is not very heavily organized, because it's relatively new, is high-tech industry, so I presume that in the region of Waterloo it will be included with something else. Anyway, Waterloo is going to be included in an LTAB. We see from the University of Waterloo the spawning of very new high-tech industries that have come from the critical mass of expertise that the university has developed. This is great. We've got a lot of new companies, 100 new companies, of high-tech industry.

1640

For whatever reason—they're so new, they're not organized yet. They probably will be some day and that's fine if that happens, but right now they're not. So those are very new jobs. They're very new to Ontario and new to the world because they're really the cutting edge of technology. We've got new people learning new skills and having new or different requirements, say, from maybe the auto workers who have been there for a while and are organized. Again, how are the people in some of the older jobs going to understand the skills requirements of those high-tech, cutting-edge types of people who need to have training too right on the cutting edge of technology who maybe are ahead or in a different direction from other workers? If we don't have representatives from that workplace, how are we going to know what their needs are and help them to make sure that Ontario is a high-value-added, high-wage economy?

Mr Gary Wilson: I agree with the critic from the official opposition that obviously there are going to be jobs that we can't imagine are going to be like, just looking again to history and knowing that there has been a progression. So the question is, can we build in the kind of flexibility that would meet that need?

Again I come back to the fact that the people who are there who going to be at the board will be aware of that because they represent all interests. But I should point out too that there is the opportunity of regulations that can be used to make sure that representation does meet the needs of the particular areas.

Mrs Cunningham: Just to put my remarks on the record with regard to the issue about organized labour dominating the labour representation on the board, even though we put an amendment further down in this regard: I think I would just like to comment that organized labour will have a major role in shaping the province's future training programs in many ways, not just because it's got eight seats on the board but because it's extremely important to the process. But the eight seats certainly give them a significant advantage. The Ontario Federation of Labour has been allocated seven of those seats and the Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council has only one seat. We all know that organized labour represents only one third of

the province's workforce and the Ontario Federation of Labour only a portion of that.

So the question is, who will represent the views of the majority of the province's workers? This has been a concern that has been raised throughout the communities across the province. To ignore it is not to be listening. To take one stand, as this government has done in spite of this concern, is indicative of a government that said it would do things differently, and to allow unions that account for approximately 35% of the workforce to hold all of the major seats on the board is unrealistic and unfair, as stated by many of the presenters. We're quoting from them here: "The non-unionized majority must be representative." We had many discussions in committee, and I won't go into that in great detail except to say that as the Christian Labour Association of Canada stated in its remarks: "The real concern for all of us should be, can the OFL and the building trades council, in view of their philosophy and track record, be expected to act evenhandedly and in the best interests of approximately 65% of Ontario workers who do not want to belong to these organizations' affiliated unions?" This is their question, not mine.

"Peeling away all of the rhetoric about a new era in labour relations, broad consultation, public involvement, cooperation and partnership, what is there on the public record that reassures us that these labour representatives indeed can put self-interests aside and have progressive ideas about what it might take for this province to remain as efficient, productive and competitive as it can be in a global economic environment?"

I put those words on the record only to remind the government that this Ontario Training and Adjustment Board and the operation of the governing body will be watched very carefully. These were the kinds of concerns that were raised. If I were in government, and I wish I were, I would like to hear this kind of criticism. It's called prevention. You can then work to make certain that these concerns are met in the operation of this board.

We put forth an amendment with regard to subsection 9(4.1) and the directors, but I'll hold my remarks for the moment because we have another amendment with regard to the section that the member for Timiskaming just put forward on behalf of the Liberal caucus.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'd just like to respond briefly to what the member from the third party was saying. She said she was quoting from that organization, and I'm not quite sure whether she's agreeing with the remarks. Certainly the—

Mrs Cunningham: I think I made it clear that I was just putting them on the record.

Mr Gary Wilson: Just putting them on the record; all right. Then I will reiterate, though, that at least the critic from the official opposition and I agree that the

philosophy and track record of organized labour has been very good, has been exemplary, I would say, in promoting the interests of all workers, not just organized workers.

I think to suggest that only organized labour has some kind of narrow self-interest and not that other groups in society have that is misleading. In fact, by bringing the labour market partners together, we are attempting to encourage the kind of cooperation that exists so clearly in training issues in individual workplaces, shall we say, into a larger sphere, and we're building on the cooperation that can exist among all the labour market partners in doing this.

We think, as I say, after wide consultation, we've reached a process that will encourage that cooperation and achieve real results that will benefit all Ontarians.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, on a point of order: I'm looking at the clock. We've got 15 minutes left. I'm wondering if we can at least read our amendments in, because we're not going to finish this. There's no way we can get through it.

I know both my colleague from Timiskaming and myself have more amendments. We both have comments that are very short, and it probably would be better if we just got them on the record. If we don't do that—and I'll take your advice here, Mr Chair—how can we then vote on amendments that haven't even been placed? Perhaps you could guide us in how we could get them on the record right now.

The Second Deputy Chair: The Chair will be reading all amendments at 5 o'clock to make sure that they are part of Hansard, and we still have 15 minutes in which to debate and proceed on to other amendments if the committee so desires.

We will then proceed to Mr Ramsay's amendments. Is it the pleasure of the House that Mr Ramsay's amendments to subsections 9(2), (3) and (4) carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We have five members who have stood up; the vote will therefore be stacked till 5 o'clock.

We now proceed to Mrs Cunningham's amendment to subsection 9(2).

Mrs Cunningham: I move that subsection 9(2) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Same

"(2) There shall be twenty-seven directors, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, as follows:

"1. Nine directors representing business, three of whom shall represent the industrial sector, three the service sector, and three the construction sector.

"2. Nine directors representing labour, three of whom shall represent the industrial sector, three the service

sector, and three the construction sector.

"3. Five directors representing educators and trainers, one of whom shall represent school boards, one community colleges, one universities, one private sector trainers and one community-based trainers.

"4. One director representing francophones.

"5. One director representing persons with disabilities.

"6. One director representing racial minorities.

"7. One director representing women.

"Co-chairs

"(2.1) One of the directors representing business and one of the directors representing labour shall be designated as co-chairs."

Mr Chair, if I could talk about the intent and put a few comments.

The amendment expands the board of directors to 27 seats to ensure that business, labour, education and social groups are fairly represented.

Again, if I can speak to the parliamentary assistant, we're now talking about a group of labour representatives who came and asked for a change, and so we're trying to reflect in this amendment their concerns which we agree with.

The reason that we went this route is because we were trying to present the government with another alternative. The Liberal caucus and we agreed that education should have five representatives, so we have it here again, but we've also brought forward the concerns of the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario.

Although not specified in the legislation, the government has indicated that the Ontario Federation of Labour will be given seven of the eight seats on the OTAB board. I tried to speak to this before. The building trades council will be given the eighth seat.

1650

This configuration has been criticized by both business and the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario. Now, they weren't part of the deal obviously, because obviously they had to come to the table, or maybe they were part of the deal and lost. Who knows? But we do know there was a deal. The construction sector has a long history of proactive investment in the training of its workforce and yet has relocated only one seat on the OTAB board.

I can speak from personal experience over the years in education, some 15 years where we in fact had cooperative work programs, where we tried for apprenticeship training programs, and certainly as administrator of a very large social agency in London, Ontario, when we provided spaces for young people in their training.

I can tell you that labour wasn't always supportive,

and to stand up as the parliamentary assistant did and talk about the track record, many of us in this province who have been involved in training programs over the years are very excited about the possibility of OTAB working, and although we're providing you with amendments today, the purpose of these amendments is to improve this tremendous organization, which many are criticizing as being a big bureaucracy that won't get anything done.

The purpose of our amendments isn't to disagree with the government but to provide them with improvements to their legislation. I think it's sad that one by one they stand up and say, "We won't do it." But you should know about the track record in many instances of the local unions in municipalities across this province. They haven't always been agreeable when it comes to placing people in jobs, in both the private and public sector, for the purpose of cooperative education and training. They've often taken it, and I've been there, to the collective bargaining table and said, "Look, we don't want that person working in the kitchen," or "We don't want that person working in maintenance. They're taking up the work of people who could be employed and a member of our union."

So don't ignore it, that's a problem we have to face, and with due respect to the Ontario Federation of Labour, they recognize it and they say they're going to do something about it. Let's give credit where credit is due, and I can give it to labour just like I can to business, and I am right now, because I've been there.

We're telling you right now that this Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council noted in their presentation that:

"Successful cooperation between business and labour is already evident in some areas where the use of apprenticeship is dominant. The construction sector is an example of an effective partnership where considerable consensus already exists on the value and nature of apprenticeship as the preferred approach to skills development. It is important where consensus like this now exists it is preserved and supported."

The parliamentary assistant said we should build on the things that we've got, and I agree with him. So don't stand up and read your notes; talk to me about what you know about.

"OTAB should provide such sectors with the latitude and flexibility to enable their unique needs to determine their training priorities."

In terms of absolute numbers involved in apprenticeship training, the construction industry, to its credit, is the largest single group, representing somewhere in the neighbourhood of 48% of all apprentices in this province. It has considerable experience, and we have to draw on it.

Even in our school system they're still, even in these

down times, providing us with opportunities across this province for our young people to be placed in cooperative education and training programs. For what reason? We're saying thank you, we do appreciate it, and they are coming forward on their own.

Forty-eight per cent of all apprentices are placed in the construction industry. That compares to 8% in service-related apprenticeships, which is interesting, because the service sector is growing right now. There are 28% in motive power apprenticeships and 17% in industrial-related apprenticeships.

I really appreciate the public and, especially here, the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council coming to the committee and giving us good advice, the best information they've got, the best guidance they've got. The current OTAB makeup does not reflect the important contribution that the construction industry makes to training and its workforce; therefore they came to us and they recommended that Bill 96 be amended to give equal representation from the construction, industrial and service sectors for both labour and management.

This is an extremely knowledgeable group that has had tremendous impact even on the local industrial training councils, the local training boards. Where they've been successful, the construction industry has had significant impact on the recommendations for placement across the province of Ontario, and they have been successful, the local training boards. They're saying to us: "Look, listen to us. How can we do it?"

In this amendment, that's what we've attempted to do by splitting the first two groups into nine, into small groups of three, as you take a look, where we say, "three industrial sector, three service sector, three construction sector—business; three industrial sector, three service sector, three construction sector—labour." That's what they asked for and that's what we're trying to do.

Mr Gary Wilson: I thank the critic for the third party for her remarks, because in some ways they do suggest what we're trying to do here by building on the past, our past achievements.

I think she might even agree, if she were fair and had the time, and she would point to the problems that perhaps some people identify as being at business's doorstep: for instance, a lack of funding for many training programs, in fact the absence of training programs in a lot of workplaces.

But I think the important thing here is that we are trying to build on the level of cooperation that exists now and we think can be developed through the kind of arrangement we have. She pointed quite correctly to the construction trades as being an example of the kind of cooperation that has existed between business and labour.

It is something that we are trying to tap into, and of course there is the representative from the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council who has one of the directors' seats, and there is the fact that the Ontario Federation of Labour represents many construction workers as well.

There is the reference group that can very directly advise the labour section, as well as the business, on matters relating to the construction industry, and indeed in matters for the other sections that are mentioned in this amendment.

I guess finally too I come back to the fact that the directors represent the interests of all Ontarians and will be sensitive to the successes that exist in the construction trades as far as cooperation on training programs exists.

In any case, I do want to say very quickly that the number of directors this would involve adds up to what would be considered to be an unwieldy number, especially when you include the three non-voting people who would be on the committee as well.

The Second Deputy Chair: Thank you. Further debate on Mrs Cunningham's amendment to subsection 9(2)? Is the committee ready for the question?

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to subsection 9(2). Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment carry?

All those in favour please say "aye."

All those opposed please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

The vote will be stacked. We now proceed with further amendments to section 9. Mrs Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: I move that section 9 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Same

"(4.1) In the selection of directors representing labour, the importance of reflecting the proportions of Ontario's labour force that work in organized and unorganized workplaces shall be recognized."

I think it's most unfortunate that we're stuck with five minutes left. My colleague from Timiskaming and myself have followed this process for more than 18 months now and we can't even get our amendments on the record.

I should just tell you that one of the greatest concerns right now is the makeup of the local boards and how they're going to work into this legislation. There are other amendments that we wanted to put forward, especially with regard to these locals boards, and we know that these local boards have to be locally driven.

There's great criticism by the government that they're not working, and therefore they want to give them perhaps lesser power. We don't know. We certainly know that geographically the areas are being disputed,

because we've gone from some 50-odd boards down to 21. Perhaps the parliamentary assistant knows that number. I'll figure it out before I finish speaking so I can get it properly on the record.

But I can tell you now, Mr Chairman, that both the member for Timiskaming and myself would love to have had the opportunity to put our amendment and speak to section 18, because we know that presentation after presentation consistently stated that local boards must be allowed to be active and effective in responding to local training needs, while OTAB provides a broad policy and accountability framework, that the structure should be grass roots rather than top down, and that people who are now sitting on those local boards are the ones who ought to be reappointed because they have got the expertise and training.

I'm speaking more to process right now, Mr Chairman, and I hope you'll give my colleague the member for Timiskaming a couple of minutes to sum up this debate on this issue—

The First Deputy Chair (Mr Dennis Drainville): I thank the honourable member.

Mrs Cunningham: —because we never should have been faced with a time allocation motion on this huge OTAB legislation that's going to affect the training in Ontario for the next few decades, if it works at all.

The First Deputy Chair: Would you please take your seat.

Mrs Cunningham: I'm going to close by saying how disappointed I am in the process.

1700

The First Deputy Chair: I thank the honourable member for London North. As the honourable member will know, at precisely this time we begin to read the motions and the amendments as put forward.

The motion by Mrs Cunningham to subsection 9(4.1):

Mrs Cunningham moves that section 9 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Same

"(4.1) In the selection of directors representing labour, the importance of reflecting the proportions of Ontario's labour force that work in organized and unorganized workplaces shall be recognized."

Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment carry?

All those in favour of the amendment will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will stack the vote.

Shall sections 10 and 11 carry? Carried.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chair, can you explain to me what's happening right now? I thought we stacked the

votes.

The First Deputy Chair: We stack the votes, but we have to go through these sections.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to subsection 12(3) of the bill to be struck out and the following substituted:

"Quorum

"(3) Fourteen directors, five of whom represent business and five of whom represent labour, are required to constitute a quorum.

"Decision-making

"(4) A decision of the directors requires the approval of fourteen directors, five of whom represent business and five of whom represent labour."

Is it the pleasure of the House that this amendment carry?

All those in favour of the amendment will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will stack the vote.

Do sections 13 through 17 carry? Carried.

Mr Ramsay has moved an amendment to section 18 of the bill, that it be struck out and the following substituted. Dispense? Dispense.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment carry?

All those in favour of the amendment will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We stack the vote.

Mrs Cunningham has moved that section 18 of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Local training and adjustment boards

"18(1) OTAB shall, after consultation with Employment and Immigration Canada and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board designate local training and adjustment boards that have been established in accordance with the regulations made under this Act.

"Composition and operation

"(2) In decisions about the composition and operation of a designated local training and adjustment board, the following shall be taken into account:

"1. The wishes and needs of the local community.

"2. The desirability of incorporating existing entities, such as community industrial training committees, that provide labour force—

Interjection.

The First Deputy Chair: Dispense? Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment carry?

All those in favour of the amendment, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will stack the vote.

Shall sections 19 and 20 carry? Carried.

There is another motion, an amendment made by Mrs Cunningham to section 21, which is out of order.

Shall sections 21 to 29 carry?

All those in favour of the motion, please say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We shall stack that vote.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to clauses 30(1)(a) and (b). Mrs Cunningham moves that subsection 30(1) of the bill be amended by striking out clauses (a) and (b).

Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment carry?

All those in favour of the amendment, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will stack this vote.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to clause 30(1)(k). Mrs Cunningham moves that subsection 30(1) of the bill be amended by striking out clause (k).

Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment carry?

All those in favour of the amendment, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will stack the vote.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to subsection 30(2) of the bill, that it be struck out and the following substituted:

"Consultation

"(2) Before a regulation is made under subsection (1), the minister shall consult with OTAB and with each reference committee about it."

Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment carry?

All those in favour of the amendment, please say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will stack the vote.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to section 30.1, that there be the following section added:

"Review

"30.1(1) On or before the second anniversary of the coming into force of this act, the standing committee on resource development shall undertake a comprehensive review of this act and of the composition, funding and operations of OTAB, its councils and designated local training and adjustment boards.

"Recommendations

"(2) Within one year after beginning its review, the committee shall make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly regarding amendments to this act and changes to be made in its implementation and administration."

Is it the pleasure of the House that this amendment carry?

All those in favour of the amendment, say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay,"

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will stack that vote.

Shall sections 31 and 32 carry? Carried.

Call in the members; a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1709 to 1714.

The First Deputy Chair: Order, please. I would ask all members to please take their seats.

Mr Ramsay has moved an amendment to clauses 1(a) and 1(b).

All those in favour of the amendment, please stand and remaining standing to be counted.

All those opposed to the amendment, please remain standing to be counted.

As the ayes are 24 and the nays 60, the amendment is lost.

Shall section 1 stand part of the bill? Agreed.

Mr Ramsay has moved an amendment to subsections 9(2), (3) and (4). Same vote?

The ayes being 24 and the nays being 60, I declare the amendment lost.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to subsection 9(2). Same vote?

The ayes being 24 and the nays 60, I declare the amendment lost.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to section 9(4.1). Same vote?

The ayes being 24 and the nays being 60, I declare the motion lost.

Does section 9 stand part of the bill? Agreed.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to subsection 12(3). Same vote?

The ayes being 24 and the nays being 60, I declare the motion lost.

Shall section 12 stand part of the bill? Agreed.

Mr Ramsay has moved an amendment to section 18. Same vote?

The ayes being 24 and the nays being 60, I declare the amendment lost.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to section 18. Same vote?

The ayes being 24 and the nays being 60, I declare the motion lost.

Shall section 18 stand part of the bill? Agreed.

1720

Shall section 21 stand part of the bill? Agreed. Shall it be the same vote reversed? The ayes being 60 and the nays being 24, I declare the motion carried.

Shall sections 22 to 29 stand as part of the bill? Same vote? The ayes being 60, the nays being 24, I declare the motion carried.

Mrs Cunningham has moved amendments to clauses 30(1)(a) and (b). Is it the same vote? The ayes being 24 and the nays being 60, I declare the amendment lost.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to clause 30(1)(k). Same vote? The ayes being 24, the nays being 60, I declare the amendment lost.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to subsection 30(2). Same vote? The ayes being 24, the nays being 60, I declare the amendment lost.

Shall section 30 stand as part of the bill? Agreed.

Mrs Cunningham has moved an amendment to section 30.1. Same vote? The ayes being 24 and the nays being 60, I declare the amendment lost.

Shall section 30.1 stand as part of the bill?

That vote did not carry. That section will not be created in the bill. That was a mistake of the Chair's.

Shall the title carry? Carried.

Shall I report the bill to the House? Agreed.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet and Government House Leader): I move that the committee rise and report.

The First Deputy Chair: Shall the motion carry? Carried.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): On a point of order, Mr Chair: I think it's fair to say that all of this is rather a formality since the government has time-allocated this. You have no option and the motion is in fact out of order.

My view, Mr Chair, is that you should acknowledge that these people have dispensed with the rules as far as the conduct of this business is concerned and carry on as is the special order of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): The committee of the whole House begs to report one bill without amendment and asks for leave to sit again.

Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ EN MATIÈRE D'EMPLOI

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 79, An Act to provide for Employment Equity for Aboriginal People, People with Disabilities, Members of Racial Minorities and Women / Loi prévoyant l'équité en matière d'emploi pour les autochtones, les personnes handicapées, les membres des minorités raciales et les femmes.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Are they not supposed to open the doors between votes on amendments?

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Yes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): My understanding is that the doors do not have to be open between amendments.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I stand corrected. It was I who interjected that they were supposed to open the doors between each of the votes if they'd been stacked. Because the rules have been dispensed with under the time allocation motion and the rules no longer apply to this particular case, I agree with your ruling that there is but one call of the members to vote.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Bruce. We continue with our rotation. I believe the last person who spoke on this bill was Mr Runciman, and now I recognize the honourable Attorney General.

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Women's Issues): As minister responsible for women's issues, I take great pride in having the opportunity to speak today in support of Bill 79. Employment equity legislation means that the historical inequities faced by the large majority of women in the workforce will finally begin to be addressed. This is particularly important for racial minority women, aboriginal women and women with disabilities.

During our consultation process, we sought the advice of Ontarians. The government has listened and it has heard. It has heard the frustration and the disappointment—

The Acting Speaker: Order. I would ask the honourable members to please take the conversations out of the House. The honourable Attorney General is addressing the House on this bill and I would ask that there be order in the House so the Attorney General may continue her remarks. Please leave the conversations out of the House, if possible.

Hon Mrs Boyd: The government has heard the frustration and disappointment of all those people who have been denied the right to participate fully in our economy. The bill before us today is the outcome of extensive consultations with a variety of interest groups. Many women's groups have been involved in these

talks, along with employers, unions and equity specialists.

The one thing we heard over and over again was how often women feel shut out and excluded. Some spoke about closed doors, others about glass ceilings and glass walls. What they told us spoke volumes about missed opportunities, wasted resources and numerous barriers: barriers to employment, barriers to training, barriers to advancement, barriers to accommodation and barriers to self-sufficiency.

Statistics tell the tale. Now, I realize no one likes statistics, but we all know that behind these nameless figures are people, a great number of whom live very real lives.

Earlier this spring, Statistics Canada released its findings on the wage gap and occupational segregation and we got headlines that heralded progress. Witness the *Globe and Mail* headline of January 15, 1993, "Wage Gap Between the Sexes Shrinking," or the *Toronto Star's* headline of the same day, "Women's Pay Creeps Towards 70% of Men's."

Just how fast is this creeping progress and how quickly is the gap shrinking? Information from Statistics Canada shows us that the wage gap has diminished—gradually and by a relatively small margin. In the mid-1960s women earned 60% of what men earned, and in 1991 women earned about 69.6% for every dollar made by a male counterpart. Certainly the word "gradual" is quite appropriate, but the National Action Committee on the Status of Women has more aptly labelled the progress as glacial.

I urge members to consider what this means. Women's wages have increased barely 10 percentage points in almost 30 years. Are we going to be happy to sit back and say that what was good enough 20 years ago is good enough today and remains the best we can do for tomorrow? Is that good enough for our daughters? Don't we owe it to the next generation to jump-start this creeping progress?

I'm very proud of this government's pay equity legislation, but it is estimated that pay equity alone will only close the wage gap by a mere 5%. It can only be one part of a comprehensive strategy to improve women's wages and economic opportunities.

1730

We have little chance to make any inroads against the wage gap until we take a hard look at where women's jobs are concentrated. Here too we have headlines heralding progress. The *Globe and Mail* of April 14, 1993, reads, "More High-Wage Jobs Going to Women." The article goes on to say that in the five-year period between 1985 and 1990, the number of women in the 10 highest-paying jobs increased by 53%.

That might look like something to cheer about, until we read on to learn that in absolute numbers, we are

only speaking of fewer than 20,000 women across all of Canada. Still, those lucky few were even further behind in terms of the wage gap than the average woman in that they made 61.2 cents on every dollar made by their male peers.

The harsh facts are that only 20% of the workers in the highest-paid occupations in Canada are women. Women represent only 20% of the categories, which include judges and magistrates, physicians and surgeons, dentists, lawyers, senior and other managers, air pilots, chiropractors, engineers and university teachers.

On the other hand, women are more than generously represented in the 10 lowest-paid job categories. Women account for 75% of sewing machine and textile workers, general farming and horticultural workers, crop and livestock farmers, bartenders, cleaners, service station attendants, housekeepers, food and beverage servers and child care workers.

I'm sure I don't have to remind you that aboriginal women, women with disabilities and racial minority women make up a large majority of these low-wage workers. That's when they can get jobs. Women are grossly overrepresented among those who rely on social assistance. Again, women who are members of designated groups are particularly vulnerable when they attempt to access employment.

Voluntary measures to encourage employment equity clearly have not been effective. Only with mandatory measures can we as a government fulfil our responsibility to the women of Ontario to ensure equity of opportunity and of achievement within the restructured economy of Ontario. I could go on, but I know my honourable colleagues are waiting to add their support to this long overdue legislation, so I will yield the floor to them.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for her participation in the debate. Questions and/or comments?

Hon Elaine Ziemba (Minister of Citizenship and Minister Responsible for Human Rights, Disability Issues, Seniors' Issues and Race Relations): I'd like to congratulate my colleague for making those very good remarks. As we heard yesterday from the opposition, there was quite a contrary comparison to the role of women in the workforce, and I must say that the comments made by my colleague the Attorney General today have clarified the position considerably. I want to congratulate her and thank her for those comments and those ably stated words about how far behind women have really been in our society, how far behind they continue to be and the very slow progress that women have made in the workplace.

But today I also want to mention that employment equity is about the future, the future of Ontario; it's about the future of our children and our young people.

Although I was going to rise on a point of personal privilege, I will state to you now that I have very good news to tell the House. My scheduler, Marta Kwiatek, has had a baby today. I think this goes with what we are debating today, about the future of our young people, about the future of our society and that employment equity is for our young people.

I want to say that we're very proud of Marta and her newborn son and know that what we are doing in this government is for the young people who are being born today, for the children who are being born today, for all of our children, and to make sure that this is really, truly a more fair and equitable society. I know all members in the House would want to congratulate Marta and her husband and their fine baby son.

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): I'd like to participate in response to the remarks made by the honourable Attorney General, Marion Boyd, and say, what fabulous remarks. It was very inspirational to sit and listen to those. I know she's a hard worker in the fight for women's equality. Let me join with that. There are many, many parallels to the struggle within the disabled movement and I think it's really, really important that her information and her role and her contribution to the legislation really do inspire women's communities all over this province. It gives people hope, especially for our future generations. It gives them that hope that justice will be done and true equality some day will be realized.

I'd like to thank the Attorney General and also this government. Really, social democracy is at work here and social justice. This is a social justice issue that is important to many people.

Mr Robert Frankford (Scarborough East): I would just like briefly to take the opportunity of participating in this very important debate. I very much welcome the well-thought-out and comprehensive remarks of the minister responsible for women's issues. I myself am the father of three daughters, so I feel very glad to be part of this government bringing in this very important legislation.

As she says, we are dealing with combined factors. Sex clearly is one part of the factors which discriminate in the workplace, added to the other factors of race and disability. These things are all combined. We have to bring in this legislation which comprehensively deals with all these factors.

Like my colleague from York East, I'm very proud to be part of a social democratic approach which is bringing in this long-desired legislation and I just want to take this opportunity of briefly participating to congratulate the minister.

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): Every once in a while, we have a chance to sit in the Legislature and listen to a member put across some points that are

very important, well-thought-out points that affect a lot of people out there whom we represent. We heard that today. The member for London Centre, my good friend Marion Boyd, the minister responsible for women's issues, did that.

Bill 79 is probably one that scares a lot of people. I know there are a lot of people I represent who are nervous about this, because we're talking about employment equity for aboriginal people, for people with disabilities, members of racial minorities and women. We have to take a look at things in a broader perspective, and I just have to congratulate the member for London Centre for doing that.

I'm sure as we go out through the summer and we cover the province, talking about this with people and getting information out there so that people can participate in a broader debate, a debate that will go beyond this Legislature, the people are going to feel more comfortable with it.

When we talk about this, I remember the workplace I came from, General Motors, before I was an elected MPP, and think back to an earlier time. I had a fellow worker beside me on the assembly line who was an immigrant. This person never spoke a word of English and managed to get a job and contribute as a taxpayer to the province of Ontario. That's what this is about, letting people who are members of different visible minority groups out there actually participate actively in the workforce and make a contribution to the lifestyle of all the people of Ontario.

On occasion, there are long-drawn-out speeches in here. The member for London Centre didn't do that. Actually she spoke quite well, concisely, around the fact that women haven't been fairly treated. The numbers, the statistics, prove it. She did that quite well, and I just want to congratulate her.

1740

Hon Mrs Boyd: I'd like to thank my colleagues for their very kind remarks. I think one of the things that is important for us to establish in this House is the fact that there is a comprehensive vision of equity that is represented in this bill, but also in many of the other pieces of legislation we have brought before this House.

If you look at the goal we have in terms of the employment equity legislation we have brought forward and are speaking about today, the pay equity legislation, the proposals around social assistance, the proposals and the new legislation that's now in effect around long-term care, one begins to get a complete picture. We believe that every human being living in Ontario has the right and needs to have the opportunity to participate in our economy and that there are many different means governments can take to allow that to happen.

It is important for us as legislators always to keep in mind that no one piece of legislation in this group of

legislation is going to be successful by legislation. It's important for us to continue our work and to ensure that all these pieces that come together will become the foundation that will ensure that future generations of Ontarians indeed have equal opportunity and the possibility of equal achievement.

As we move into the next century, the reality is that we as an economy are going to need the contributions of absolutely every one of our citizens. The demographics show us that we cannot afford to ignore the talents and the achievements of large numbers of our population, 52% of whom are women and another approximately 12% to 15% of whom are in the designated groups. This is a very important piece of legislation and one which we will be proud to see passed through this Legislature.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): I'm pleased to enter the debate here this evening. I wish I could say that this particular bill was a piece of legislation that I would be able to support, but I will not. Unfortunately, this bill represents the most far-reaching employment equity legislation in all of North America. I say that at a time when the minister, who is saying—

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): Did you run up the stairs?

Mr Carr: The member's saying, "Have you run up the stairs?" I certainly have, just to get here, but we made it.

This legislation, apart from that, is what the minister says is the most far-reaching legislation in all of North America.

The bill is based on the premise that all employers engage in deliberate and systematic discriminatory practices and it blames all of the problems on industries and business, this at a time when we have industry—I was critic for the old Industry, Trade and Technology, which is now Economic Development and Trade. The people of this province are saying the number one problem is the overburdening regulations that are killing jobs in this province. As the critic involved, it is probably the second most important criterion for business for not investing in this province right now, after taxes.

I say to this minister who is here today that the fact of the matter is that this piece of legislation is going to kill jobs in the province of Ontario, whether she likes it or not. She now has become known on this side of the House as the quota queen, as she's become known to the people of this Legislature, because this is nothing but setting quotas for the people of the province of Ontario. I honestly, truly believe that the government's intentions are to create an environment where people will hire people, but I want to tell you, this piece of legislation will not do it and I will not be supporting it.

The preamble states as a conclusive finding that the

consequences of members of designated groups in most areas of employment is the result of intentional and systematic discrimination. I want to tell you that businesses across this province are not setting out to discriminate against people. But the problem we've got right now—and we've outlined this in all our papers, whether it's the New Directions on education—the way to deal with it is through the education system. We've outlined our situation to be able to end some of the discrimination that is happening, but this will not do it.

Quite frankly, what this government has said is it's going to set quotas for the people of this province, and I look at it and say, as a parent with two daughters who are going to be down here today, and a son as well, that I honestly, truly believe that what we need to do—and I'm going to talk about the women's issue right now—is to be able to set up an environment to allow them to be able to compete.

As I look across at the other side, I will use a couple of examples of the cabinet ministers who are present. The member for Beaches-Woodbine is somebody who was put in cabinet not because she's a woman. Quite frankly, she's probably the most capable minister you've got over there. She doesn't need any help in terms of getting involved in becoming a member of the cabinet. But this government right now is saying to the businesses out there, "You need to set up quotas to be able to help those people." I use that as a bit of an example, to show that the member for Beaches-Woodbine doesn't need any help getting into cabinet with this government because, quite frankly, she has more talent than a lot of people in there, including everybody right up to and including the Deputy Premier.

But what we've got right now is a government on the other side that says the only way you're going to be able to help the disadvantaged is to be able to set up quotas. I say it's absolute nonsense. Right across this province right now, during this period of time, if you give people the education system, we do not need to set up quotas.

I look at what's going to happen in business and I don't know how it's going to be done. I know the commission has wide-ranging power. I suppose what they're going to do at the end of the day is line everybody up and say: "Do you have your right number of women? Do you have your right number of minorities up there?" They're going to take a look at them and say, "Is that what needs to be done?" I don't think in this day and age you need to do that.

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): The people of Ontario deserve better from you, far better. Read the legislation before you open your mouth.

Mr Carr: All you need to do is to allow an opportunity for the people to be able to compete. If you do that—I use the example of a case they can relate to here in cabinet—someone like the member for Beaches-

Woodbine does not need to have quotas set for the cabinet, and I think originally this is what this government did.

I look at the other members who were involved in the cabinet and some of the people who were put in for no other reason than the fact they were women, and the fact of the matter is those are some of the individuals who didn't do a very good job as cabinet ministers.

I look around at some of the others. I look at the member for Scarborough West, who is now in cabinet, very capable. She doesn't need any help in terms of getting into cabinet in this province. But what you're saying to business is: "I'm sorry, we can't base it on criteria. We're going to have to set quotas. You're going to have a certain amount of this group, you're going to have a certain amount of this group, and we're going to set it up."

The only thing this piece of legislation is going to do is it's going to help the lawyers, and it's going to help the consultants who are going to be out there, and help to fatten them. This piece of legislation, at the end of the day, is not going to do anything to deal with discrimination.

The member from across says I haven't read the legislation. I wish he would read the legislation.

The bill fails to acknowledge the underrepresentation of some of the groups. The individuals who make up the employees' present workforce may have been hired at a time when the composition of the community from which the workforce was hired was different from the present day. I don't know what you're going to end up doing, whether you're going to change it daily or weekly, but the fact of the matter is that you're going to have the composition change. A week from now it's going to be different. Are you going to change it then?

Further, the bill ignores the education barriers which prevent members of designated groups from acquiring the skills. That's all you need to do. In the marketplace today in education—and let's use the example of women—you've got more women graduating with MBAs than you do men right now, and the same in the case of doctors. It's almost equal, 50-50. You don't need to set up quotas. All you need to do is set up a system which will allow anybody from any group to be able to compete and move ahead.

Quite frankly, I look at the situation right now in setting up the quotas and saying to companies, "You will hire x amount of people from this particular designated group or x amount from this group," and it is nothing but quotas. This minister will henceforth be known as the quota queen in the province of Ontario.

We need to deal with the social conditions out there that create that. There's nothing in here. You have done more to destroy jobs and economic opportunity in this province than any other government in the history of

this province. You've destroyed more jobs since you were elected in September 1990 than any other government in the history of this province, and yet you turn around and say, "We're going to help these groups."

I say to you that the fact of the matter is that your government has destroyed more jobs and more economic opportunity for everybody across all classes than any other government in the province of Ontario.

What we've got here is the minister saying now that Bill 79 is not based on quotas. Bill 79, she says, is not based on quotas, yet it is still a number-driven system.
1750

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Mr Speaker, are you going to let him get away with saying all this stuff?

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr Carr: The member for Downsview is talking about how that is not wrong. Take a look at the facts. When you came into government, the unemployment rate was 6%; it's now around 11%. You've almost doubled it. Ontario has lost 80% of the jobs; this has been an Ontario-led recession. I say to the members opposite that it has been the Premier of this province, the Minister of Finance and this government that have destroyed more jobs than any other government in the history of this province. The fact is that they did.

Mr Malkowski: On a question of privilege, Mr Speaker: I would like to respond to the member for Oakville. Federal policies have led to the high unemployment statistics. This is misleading.

The Acting Speaker: No, I'm sorry. The honourable member for Oakville South has the floor.

Mr Carr: The fact is, that here is a government that came in and said that because of compassion, it was going to help all the groups in the province of Ontario.

Mr Mills: They're going to discredit the social order, that's what they're going to do. They're going to discredit the social order in Canada.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The honourable member for Durham East will come to order.

Mr Carr: You've destroyed more jobs, you've done more to kill economic opportunity, and this Premier has done more to destroy the economic and social fabric of this province than any other Premier of this province.

I take a look at the situation out there right now. This government came in and said, with all its self-serving sensitivity, that it was going to handle all the problems. All they have done since they've been elected is destroy jobs in the province of Ontario, and I say this piece of legislation is just going to add to it. There is nothing in here that's going to allow the opportunity for job creation.

I've got a situation right now where I take a look at businesses, and they are saying, "We are overtaxed, we

are overgoverned, we are overregulated, we are overlegislated." So what does this government do? Come in with more regulations, at a time when the number two reason for businesses leaving the province of Ontario is the overregulation.

Mr Perruzza: Gary, Ted stands up and he does your party well. You stand up and you completely squash—

The Acting Speaker: Order. The honourable member for Downsview will come to order.

Mr Carr: Now, I say it isn't only employment equity; it's environmental regulations, it's everything all told. But in the province of Ontario, after taxes, we now have close to 40% of the businesses saying they're thinking about leaving this jurisdiction. They're thinking about leaving this jurisdiction for other provinces or other states because the fact is that we're overregulated.

So what does this government do? Do they come in with any programs to reduce the regulation, to allow for more jobs to be created? No, not this socialist government. No, not them. What do they do? They increase the taxes and they increase more regulation at a time when businesses are saying, "We're not going to remain in the province of Ontario and we're not going to invest here."

I met with some of the German bankers a little while ago, and they said, "Because of the overregulation and the overtaxation, we are telling our companies, don't come to the province of Ontario." This legislation right now is going to do nothing but add to it.

The objective of Bill 79 is to ensure that every employer's workforce has employment levels that reflect designated groups. Now we're going to be out there and we're going to be counting the designated groups. We're going to line people up and say: "Do you have the right amount of this group? Are you going to have the right amount of this group?" The fact is that this bill sets quotas in the province of Ontario. It's going to kill jobs, and I certainly will not be supporting it.

The bill requires an employer to create a representative workforce, meeting the numerical goals within a specific period. This will inevitably create pressure on employers to hire candidates who are members of designated groups over candidates of the non-designated groups in order to meet the goals.

I say to the members opposite, if this isn't quotas, I don't know what is. I heard the reply from the minister when she stood up and said, "No, this isn't a quota bill, but we're going to set up numerical guidelines for companies and then we're going to have this commission that's going to sit up and is going to count everyone and see whether they met it."

The issue is not whether somebody possesses the minimum skills or qualifications needed for the job but whether the most qualified candidate will be passed over in favour of someone less qualified. I say that to

the members opposite because I use the example of the member for Beaches-Woodbine, who has more ability and talent as a woman in this Legislature than any of the other people right across. She has more talent and more ability; she doesn't need any help to get into cabinet. You didn't need to set quotas and say that a certain amount of the cabinet had to be women. She, and I use the other example of the member for Scarborough West—those two individuals don't need any help getting in there by setting quotas. They got in there because they had more talent, more ability than anybody else, and it didn't matter whether they were men or women, whether they were part of a minority. The fact is that they had more talent than anybody else.

I see the member from Hamilton, the Minister of Labour, shaking his head. The fact of the matter is that in your unions, you've gone by a situation based on seniority. I want to tell you, the Steelworkers don't love this piece of legislation, which historically has always been based on seniority. The Steelworkers don't like this piece of legislation, which sets quotas and goes over top of what has been in the labour movement: the tradition of seniority.

The member is shaking his head, but then again, I'm not too surprised from the Labour minister, the same Labour minister who said many things while he was on this side of the House and then probably was part of the government that had the most draconian piece of anti-labour legislation not more than a week ago today, if my memory serves me correctly. The Minister of Labour has not only lost a lot of credibility on this side of the House; he's lost a lot of credibility with the people he worked for, for over 20 years, who are looking at him and saying, "You have no credibility left on this or any other issue." So don't you shake your head at us and talk about what will happen, with your performance over the last little while.

Quite frankly, if you're looking for quotas, one of the things you should be able to do is to get rid of this Minister of Labour. Surely there's somebody on the other side who could do a better job than the Minister of Labour.

Bill 79 does not expressly preserve the employer's right to hire the best-qualified candidate based on the merit principle. Of course, the other side is against that. They don't believe in the merit principle. You've got to set quotas; it doesn't matter how good you are in anything. It depends on what category you fall in. It doesn't depend on ability or drive or initiative or anything else. You set quotas and those quotas then get filled, and I say it's disgusting in the province of Ontario.

You're saying they need a boost and help. They do not need a boost. I use the example of two of your cabinet ministers, who are women, who can do a better job than anybody else and should be there, not based on

any quotas but because they have the ability. In the province of Ontario, as somebody who has two daughters and one boy, I honestly, truly believe that if you give the skills necessary, my two daughters will be able to go as far as their abilities take them. They do not need to have quotas set for them—they will get positions, whether it's in the government or in business—based on some government saying you'll have *x* amount of this group in there, and the only people who may be excluded are the people like my son, who might not be able to.

Without the merit principle, race and gender will be identified in the minds of others like never before. When anybody does get a job, they're going to say, "That was based on the fact that you are part of a quota." They're going to say: "You don't have the capabilities. It wasn't based on merit." They're going to say to the member for Beaches-Woodbine and the member from Scarborough: "You didn't get into cabinet because you had the best ability. You got into cabinet because there were quotas." And I say that's wrong, because the people of this province, the people who are out there today, know that it should be based on merit. It doesn't matter about your race or what sex you are; it should be based on merit. Quite frankly, the people who will rise to the occasion are the people they pretend to help.

Without the merit principle, race and gender will be identified in the minds of others like never before. There will be a perception of special treatment. They will say, "The only reason you got the job is because of this quota system we have under Bill 79." Anyone who does earn a position based on merit will have his or her achievement stigmatized by those who believe he or she was hired to meet a quota. That's exactly what this bill is.

The members opposite know the word "quota" has a negative connotation here in the province of Ontario, but that is what this legislation is. You're setting quotas for business, saying, "You will hire *x* amount of this group and *x* amount of that group and *x* amount of that group and *x* amount of that group." I say that in this day and age it should be based on ability, on merit, and if you do that, the people you tried to help will rise to the top.

Some of the other people who have been involved in this say this is actually reverse discrimination. I honestly, truly believe it is. You're saying to people: "It doesn't matter on your skills and your merit and your

characteristics and all the other things that allowed you to get ahead. It's going to be based on quotas. That's how you're going to be able to do it."

I know how this government does it, too. They were able to get the business community to buy in because it said: "We're only going to do it for companies that are medium and large. We're not going to do it for small companies." The fact is that it's the small companies that are producing the jobs out there. The only jobs being created are in the small business sector. They do not have the time to sit around and have consultants and lawyers analyse whether they have the right amount of people. They want to go out and hire people based on skills and merit, not on government quotas.

If, as a result of this legislation, you kill jobs, then it's going to be on your heads, because the ironic thing is that you've already done it in the three years you've been in. We've lost more jobs in the three years that you've been a government than ever before in the history of this province, including the Depression, and I say a lot of the fault is directly related to this government, this Premier, this Minister of Finance and this cabinet that comes in with some of the crazy legislation.

We talked about the situation with education. I honestly, truly believe that through the education system is the way you end up getting rid of discrimination. You allow people to get the skills and training necessary, and then they will not need a quota system to be able to get a job. They will get it because they have the best skills in whatever field it may be, whether it's law, whether it's doctors, whether it's nurses. If you give them the skills necessary, that's how they're going to be able to compete.

The ironic thing is that at a time when they're talking about making employment more fair and equitable, at the same time, through a lot of their legislation in the areas of education—

I was just getting wound up here. I see the Speaker is giving me the time-out sign. I guess it must be 6 of the clock. I will bow to his judgement.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): I would say to the honourable member that when we continue this debate, the honourable member may rise in his place again and continue.

It being now 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1802.

ERRATUM

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Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

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Thursday 15 July 1993

The House met at 1002.

Prayers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

TAXATION OF FARM LAND

Mr Villeneuve moved private member's notice of motion number 19:

That, in the opinion of this House, because the issue of the property taxation of producing farm land has become of increasing concern to farmers, as education costs have risen and as municipal service costs have increased, while over the same time farmers have not received a proportional increase in services, and that the Ontario farm property tax rebate has distorted the actual program budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and that the Fair Tax Commission's Property Tax Working Group has evaded the issue by calling the taxation of farm property a farm policy issue (as opposed to a tax issue), the Government of Ontario should, first, list the farm property tax rebate as a budget item separate from the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and second, the government of Ontario should initiate, with farm and municipal organizations, a thorough and public review of the taxation of producing farm land with the aim of maintaining a viable agricultural industry and family farms in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin):

Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the honourable member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville):

The farm property tax rebate has been an issue that's been around for a number of years. However, the problem is that it's a hot potato and it has to be addressed on an annual basis. We find, from time to time, and as it occurred with the Liberals when they were in power, that the farm property tax rebate went back and forth and became a political issue. We now have a government in place where public dollars are very scarce. Again, the farm property tax rebate has been frozen. Indeed, we worry about what the next step will be.

Farmers are certainly willing to pay their fair share of property taxes if all citizens are taxed in a fair and equitable manner. The problem with the taxation of farm land is that taxes on farms are out of proportion to farmers' ability to pay and out of proportion to the services received on that portion of the farm which is farm land and farm buildings, income-producing entities.

Residents of the same municipality with much higher incomes but who live in town usually pay fewer taxes and indeed receive more services. The basic principle governing the taxation of farm land in Ontario has until

now been that where farm land does not benefit from municipal services to the same extent as other properties in the municipality, it should not bear the same tax load. Today, with the province in financial difficulty, the NDP government has frozen farm property tax rebates and that principle is now being eroded.

This government is very much influenced by pressure groups. With only slightly less than 3% of the population actively involved in agriculture, the voice of agriculture is somewhat akin to a cry in the wilderness. Growing education taxes on farm land are of major concern. Education taxes today are roughly three times more than the municipal taxes and continue to climb, and yet farm land and farm buildings do not have any influence at all on the cost of education.

During the debate on farm taxes in 1970, the expected impact of escalating education taxes on farm land was countered by the government's plan to cover 60% of the education costs. That figure's been bandied about very extensively. As a matter of fact, this government promised that it would increase funding for education to 60%. That's yet to come. As a matter of fact, all different parties, at different times, promised 60% funding for education. It never quite occurred. Today we're looking at something less than 50% of the cost of education being borne by the senior level of government.

Provincial downloading on municipalities and requiring new programs from school boards have made it difficult for local governments and school boards to hold the line on taxes. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the provincial government was actually reducing costs to municipalities; for example, by taking over the administration of justice from the local tax base. In recent years, the former Liberal government and the now NDP government have created additional costs to municipalities and school boards by mandating costs. The boards and the municipalities had no say in the matter at all. The costs were simply added to their operating costs and therefore passed on to the taxpayers.

Because of escalating municipal and school board taxes, the farm tax rebate program is by far the largest spending item by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Right now, it's frozen at \$159 million, which is a very large percentage of the \$550-million total budget for the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. It distorts to a large degree the Agriculture and Food budget. Farmers everywhere want to see it moved out of OMAF, either to Municipal Affairs, where indeed Hansard debates of the late 1960s and early 1970s clearly indicate it began, or to the revenue side of the Finance ministry, where the assessment functions are actually performed.

As long as rural municipalities remained agricultural

in nature, with small, stable populations, the taxation of farm land was never a major problem or a major concern. Property taxation was almost entirely used to provide services to property. In the 1960s, population growth in towns and villages throughout rural Ontario led to an increase in the required municipal and social services, but not services to farm land or farm buildings. These were paid for by increases to municipal and local school taxes. Farms, being much larger, acreage-wise, than town residences, paid significantly more in taxes. Throughout the 1960s, farm discontent rose and threats of a tax revolt started to be taken seriously. I think the government should listen to this, because indeed I think we are on the borderline of another tax revolt.

1010

In the 1969 budget the government spoke of moving to a system of market value assessment and announced that the province would take over the assessment function across the province. The then Treasurer MacNaughton stated that farms would have to be treated differently and, indeed, in the budget of that year, and I quote, it says, "Generally, the government believes that the property tax on working farms should be considerably lower than on non-farm properties because of the limited ability of working farms to pay taxes out of current income." And the situation is even worse now than it was 30 years ago.

On June 5, 1969, the then Minister of Municipal Affairs, Darcy McKeough, announced a committee on farm assessment and taxation to report with recommendations, and the requirement of this committee was to define a working farm, to find a basis for valuing farms for tax purposes and on the manner in which farms should be taxed. The committee was to find a policy to tax working farms in a manner that was equitable with taxation of other properties that would not impose an undue burden on farms for as long as the land remained in agriculture.

When the committee reported, it recommended that "all farm land, regardless of ownership, be treated the same way. That is, land held by bona fide farmers, by developers, and by speculators should receive preferential treatment if it falls under the definition of farm land." I want members to note that even then the government shied away from trying to define a working farm. We were dealing with productive farm land, period.

The solution proposed by the government was to rebate 25% of the net property tax beginning in 1970. In 1969 the government had announced its intention to take over the property tax assessment process, which it claimed was in a shambles. While debates in the Legislature made it clear that the major need for the rebate was to counter the education tax on farm land, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Mr McKeough, pointed out that it was not possible to determine the

percentage of a farm's assessment if it were split between a residence and the farm land and farm buildings. In many, many areas, I think if a net income were used and capitalized, we would find that, indeed, the ability to pay on this farm land is certainly a lot less than many, many members in this Legislature realize.

Debates in the Legislature also indicated government members thought that rebate would be a temporary measure, necessary only until a provincial income tax or other tax reform would correct the situation. The Liberals were in agreement, with Bob Nixon supporting the government's 25% rebate, but only as a "first step towards the reform of the tax system which would, in fact, relieve the farm community at large of the responsibility to pay for a large share of education on the basis of the assessment of property."

Many years have passed. Tax reform is being talked about extensively, yet nothing has happened. Taxes rise. Municipal taxes rise in spite of the fact that our municipal politicians are doing their level best to hold the line. School boards are in the same situation.

If the Liberals are listening closely, I think they could actually pinpoint a number of rural seats in south-western Ontario particularly that were lost by Liberal members because of the then Treasurer, Mr Nixon, trying to change the farm tax rebate. Farmers never did forgive the Liberal government of the time for playing around with what indeed was a requirement and a level playing field, where education taxes must not go on farm land and farm buildings.

Mr Paul Klopp (Huron): It's interesting today we stand up to talk about this issue and I thank the honourable member for bringing the tax issue to the House today. So many times we don't get farm-type issues brought up and it is good that they are. However, the government today cannot support this resolution at this time for a number of the reasons which actually he brought up in his remarks.

I think it's important to realize that the issue isn't whether 3% of the population in this caucus or 33% of the population are farmers. This caucus is worried about all people in this province; regardless of what percentage, they're all people. In fact, in these economic times we're in, the first government since the Depression which has actually seen income of the government decline—I think it can be shown quite clearly that this government held the line. Yes, the farm tax rebate was frozen but, knowing full well what was on the line for actually a decrease, I think we have the proof in the pudding that this government does care.

Let's look back a little bit. You mentioned the Liberals. The Liberals did take this budgetary item over to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and I don't think that really was much of a problem as far as I could see because many times, and in fact today and 20 years ago, as you pointed out, everybody went to the

Minister of Agriculture to do the lobbying on any issue regarding rural Ontario. The fact that we actually put this in the budgetary line at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to me is something that I can understand.

What the Liberals did was that they insulted rural Ontario. When they put it over there that was good, but they then went and had the BS, if I can, in rural terms, to try to make it look like it was new money at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. That kind of bull, quite frankly, didn't sell in rural Ontario, and that's where the problem came in. In fact that's when the farm groups had to start saying to the government, and it came in this resolution, that we wanted to try to keep it separate as a tax issue and separate as a budgetary item. The Liberal government tried to make it look like it was a new program and we've been painted with that.

We've been very careful at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Elmer and all of us in caucus. We don't try to play games that somehow increase or decrease the budgets of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, but the Liberals brought that in.

Let's look back a little bit further to some 20 years ago, as the member brought out. Really what it came down to back then was the fact that the farm community had very low commodity prices on all things, most of us back then were mixed farms and normally there were a couple of commodities that stayed up in price and got things through.

But the fact was that all commodities were low and costs kept increasing and we could not get our share of the dollar. We were trying things like supply management, and the minister then was working hard in a couple of those areas, but indeed we weren't making enough dollars to pay for bills.

We had to get the government's attention, we saw that this was an issue that might get the attention of the government and it went for it. But the government also realized that the general community felt that the farm community was in trouble, and it agreed that it needed to have some fairness put to it and came up with a 25% reduction. But as many people said, it was only the first step. We really felt that what we needed was to get a fair share of the dollar in our commodities.

The new term now is "value added," and this government is working very hard at that. In fact, we can look at the whole area where we've made improvements over the years. The food basket is something that many people don't remember, but it was a term with which they said the farm community got over 50 cents of every dollar back to the farm gate. We are now below that in this province, and that only tells me the Liberal and Tory governments weren't working on that issue strongly enough, and we are.

The issue—and I deal with that in our community economic development programs that we're starting, the

rural loan pool programs, the private mortgage to put stability back in agriculture to help keep some fair competition out there so that we have stability, so that I can have dollars to pay for things—of the farm tax rebate is an issue that helps society to help the farm community as part of our stability and our sustainability of agriculture, and that's where it's at.

We go back a little bit again in history. He talks about Darcy McKeough, but I remember another urban Minister of Agriculture, Mr Timbrell, who came up with an idea. He said, "Let's just get rid of the tax completely off the farmers." I was definitely no card-carrying, yellow-dog supporter of the Conservative Party, but as a farmer and as a business person I look at everybody's ideas with an open mind and to question, and I really felt at that time that he did have a fair idea. Lots of other problems that the Tories were doing with regard to my side of income stability I think they weren't going ahead on, but that was an interesting issue, and I then said I would agree with that.

Unfortunately, some people put the big-P politics in that discussion. I look again at the Liberals. They didn't want to give any chance of fairness here. They looked at the politics instead of, "Does the guy have a good idea?" and they got rural Ontario all excited and created quite a groundswell, which I felt was about a mile wide and an inch deep. Maybe this is where it was a problem, having an urban Minister of Agriculture. He maybe didn't quite understand that a little bit and he backed off. I found that unfortunate, but you know, it's so easy to get people whipped up to criticize, rather than constructive criticism, so the then minister backed off, and that's fine.

1020

The Liberals had their chance. They got in, and what did they do? As the honourable member pointed out, they dilly-dallied around with the program and, yes, it's a tough issue. It's been going on for 20 years, like he pointed out. Darcy McKeough set up a committee and they couldn't find an answer. I think that the energy should have been spent on my income stability side and my interest payment stability side—something that we're doing—but they did not come up with the answers. What we were afraid of in rural Ontario was that they would take the dollars away from the program, but they wouldn't reinvest it in other programs for rural Ontario; they would just suck it into the big black hole. I think, quite frankly, the member was right.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): And you're destroying agriculture in this province, that's what you're doing.

Mr Klopp: The Liberals are getting a little frustrated, and they should. The farm community did show them at the last election. But it was more the insult that they actually tried to paint as some new money in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and, believe me,

we're not doing that and we're not going to try to do that.

So what are we doing? On the issue—on the second part of the motion—that we should set up a committee, yes, there was a committee set up. The Minister of Agriculture did push that it be part of the fair tax review and the Fair Tax Commission realized it is a very difficult issue and said that it should go on to a committee. There'll be some stuff coming out in December, I understand, and that may be dealt with later on by some other colleagues.

But in short, we do look at it as a society, to help in rural Ontario, for the stability of agriculture, but believe me, the real issues that we need to have for me as a farmer and for my colleagues as farmers is the stability that we can get in the value added, and that is what we're working at: the rural loan commodity pool, which allows a little more competition for a farmer to get a lower cost for his income inputs; the private mortgage pool, which is now out, allowing again some more competition out there in helping people to get loans that are maybe a little better interest rate, but also more recycled in rural Ontario; and what was announced in the budget, the community economic development, which allows us to get farmers and rural people into the value added side, so that we can regenerate and get a more fair dollar.

If I may go back to the old system, the food basket, in which farmers get more than what we're receiving now, because at one time it was in the 60-cent range and I think we had a better, healthy community. It got below the 50-cent mark and then the government, lo and behold, quit advertising that.

We need to get on and revitalize. We're doing that, but for those reasons and some others that will come out later, at this time it is good that it's at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food so that we can keep a handle on it, so that we can work towards getting a fairer system, and for those reasons I think it should stay there. We're not playing any games about the dollars of it, as the Liberals did, and I thank you very much.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): I'm pleased to participate in this morning's debate. I'd like to state at the beginning that you might find it unusual that a Metropolitan Toronto member, someone who I can say clearly has no farms in her riding—the riding of Oriole does not contain any farms—I'm still pleased to speak on this issue because this does not have to do with simply farms. This debate this morning, and I'm pleased that it is before us, really has to do with taxes, tax fairness and particularly municipal taxes.

I think we've heard a little bit about the history and I'd like to take the few minutes that I have to put my perspective on the record as we discuss this resolution by Mr Villeneuve, which I believe is deserving and merits support. The reason I think it merits support is

that this is an issue which has been before the Legislature and governments in this province for many years, as we heard.

Where did it all begin and when did it become a problem? In fact, it was in the late 1960s, early 1970s when the Conservative government at the time decided they were going to reform the property tax system in the province. In doing so, as they implemented this tax reform, the result was that farms in the province which, as people can well imagine, are very land-intensive—and so when you have a property tax which taxes land, regardless of how it is used—were paying significantly more taxes under Conservative tax reform than they were prior to this initiative in the late 1960s.

Of course the farmers were upset. Nobody likes to pay more taxes. But more than just being upset, what was realized fairly quickly by the Conservative Treasurer and the Conservative government at that time was that farms were paying more than their fair share because use did have some relevance to what the tax should be.

Because farms take such a large amount of land in order to produce the agricultural goods and products, whether they are farm animals or crops, the problem was that because such a large amount of land was needed, you often had a farm paying far more in taxes based on what the income of that farm was than a small business in a small rural town not too far away. It wasn't even a question of comparing what was happening on the farm to the urban big city; this was what was happening out in the county on the farm compared to a piece of property in a small town that was near the farm.

There was a recognition that this was patently unfair. It was unfair to farmers but, more than just being unfair, it was having a very serious economic impact on the farm itself. So what did the Conservative government at the time do about it? What they attempted was what I would call a Band-Aid solution.

The Band-Aid solution was in the form of a property tax rebate for farmers, based on a formula. The result of that Band-Aid was not a solution to this problem, and in fact it wasn't really support for farmers, as much as you'd like to think that now the money was going to farmers. In fact the money was really a transfer from the provincial government to the municipalities, because property taxes are paid by property owners to the municipality.

If the property owners can't afford the taxes or they are unfair, and they then don't pay their taxes, what happens is the municipalities just end up getting less and then they can't provide the needed services. Let's remember, as my friend Mr Villeneuve pointed out, it's not just for municipal services but also for education that property taxes are used.

So what you had was a situation where, as property taxes on the farms became too high and farms were failing or farmers couldn't afford to pay their taxes, then the municipality and the school board didn't have the money to provide the services that were required and the province stepped in with a rebate program to assist.

The problem was the rebate program didn't work all that well either, because the farmers, as was rightly pointed out, didn't really believe that anything was happening in the way of a support for farmers, because they knew that as a result of tax reform under the Conservatives, they were then, after the reform, paying more than their fair share. So they never considered the tax rebate as an assist to farmers, and there we had the debate percolating over the years.

I must admit, as a member of the Liberal government during the years 1985 to 1990, that we also looked at this issue and said: "What can we do to fix it? What can we do to make it fairer?" The reality is that we as well tinkered with the program in an attempt to make it fairer. It was in good faith that we attempted to fix it, but the reality is that I believe it needs a comprehensive solution that is tied generally to our whole approach to tax reform and to municipal tax reform. It's one of the reasons I'm very concerned about the result of the Fair Tax Commission.

I listened very carefully to my colleague from the NDP talking about all the things the NDP has been doing for farmers. I would say to him, in the colloquialism of the youth today, in response to his statement when he said, you know, "We are," meaning strongly supportive of farmers—I would add the word "not," which is what the kids say today when they just disagree completely with a statement that has been made. That's because the Fair Tax Commission, which was established by the NDP—their response to this issue was to say: "We're not going to deal with it. We're not going to do anything about it. We're not going to deal with it. It's too complex. It's too complicated." Frankly, it is a complicated issue, but it is about tax reform; it is not about just support for farmers.

1030

There's no question that farms and farmers in Ontario today are having a very, very difficult time. We know that with the general state of the economy, the very serious recession that we've come through, it has been province-wide in all sectors and that farms and farm incomes have suffered a devastating blow under the policies of this NDP government. But this tax rebate, the fact they have frozen it, is making the problem that much worse.

However, a complicating factor has been that over the years nobody has looked at this comprehensively. When they do, there's always this assumption that tax reform is going to mean less taxes, as opposed to looking at, how are we going to properly fund education, how are

we going to properly fund needed municipal services and how are we going to make sure that business people, whether they are on the farm, in small towns or in big cities, rightly feel that they are paying their fair share?

I want to point out that in the summer of 1990, Bob Rae had all the answers. I sat in this House from 1985 to 1990; he had all the answers then. They were all simple, they were all easy, and he was going to get it done like this. I can understand the farmers' sense of betrayal in the fact that after almost three years in government, Bob Rae and the NDP have only made matters worse.

I'm going to wind up this debate this morning in support of the resolution and say that I think it is important that we look comprehensively at a problem that was first caused by the Conservatives, that wasn't fixed by the Liberals and that has been made worse by the NDP. The farmers in this province need a break and it's time we all put our heads together to find the solution.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I'm pleased to rise this morning to speak to the resolution of the member for S-D-G & East Grenville, the resolution that states, "That, in the opinion of this House, because the issue of property taxation of producing farm land has become of increasing concern to farmers, as education costs have risen and as municipal service costs have increased, while over the same time farmers have not received a proportional increase in services, and that the Ontario farm property tax rebate has distorted the actual program budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and that the Fair Tax Commission's property tax working group has evaded the issue by calling the taxation of farm property a farm policy issue (as opposed to a tax issue), the government of Ontario should, first, list the farm property tax rebate as a budget item separate from the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and, second, the government of Ontario should initiate, with farm and municipal organizations, a thorough and public review of the taxation of producing farm land with the aim of maintaining a viable agricultural industry and family farms in Ontario."

I intend to support this resolution very, very strongly. I want to compliment the member for S-D-G & East Grenville for this outstanding resolution. I believe that he is the most passionate, most knowledgeable, most committed advocate for Ontario farmers in this House. We're fortunate to have him. I want to thank him once again for taking the time last year to come to Wellington county to show his interest in Wellington county and meeting with Wellington Federation of Agriculture people. He showed, certainly, his interest in agriculture throughout the province, including his own area of eastern Ontario, but as well, southwestern Ontario.

This resolution has to be put forward, because I personally, as the member for Wellington, have to question the NDP's commitment to agriculture. We've seen over the last three years agriculture relegated to a very minor portfolio by this government.

In Wellington county, I represent the farmers' interests as best I can with respect to the issues that come forward in this Legislature, and the property tax issue continues to be one of the most important issues that farmers have on their minds in Wellington county, as well as the GATT issue, I suppose. The GATT issue, I know, may be a mystery still to some members of the government side, but we have to maintain our capacity to produce food in Ontario, and I see supply management as being a very important component of that.

Our marketing system is designed to provide a stable business climate in which dairy farmers and other supply-managed commodities can plan, invest and receive reasonable compensation for their costs and labour from the market. Farmers and government representatives came together years ago to establish an efficient supply management system to stabilize the prices and the supplies of supply-managed commodities.

Quite simply, supply management is managing the supply to meet the market demand and encourage price stability, which is very, very important for the local economy in rural Ontario. But of course that's not the only important issue. The farm tax issue is probably every bit as important as the GATT issue in Wellington county.

I think that we see with this farm tax issue the fact that successive governments since 1985 have toyed with it, tinkered with it. We've heard during the course of the debate that annually it is reviewed for possible changes. It creates a great deal of uncertainty for farmers, and I think that's an important issue that has to be addressed.

We've seen consistently over the last number of years provincial downloading of mandated services and costs from the provincial government to the local governments to school boards, especially, for example, junior kindergarten, which we don't want and don't need, and other programs as well, to municipalities, where the cost is downloaded and the mandate of responsibility is downloaded from the province to local government, which has driven up local taxes. Municipal taxes are higher than they should be, higher than they need be had the province not downloaded responsibilities over the last number of years.

We should look at this farm tax rebate as an interim measure until the issue of tax inequity can be redressed, because I think most people support the principle of saying that farm land should not be taxed municipally.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture, over the course of its discussions on this issue, has continued to

put forward this view, and even most recently in March when it put forward its pre-budget summary, it asked that the farm property tax rebate program be continued until property tax reform eliminates the need for this interim administrative mechanism. I certainly agree with them that this is an important objective.

This resolution is a modest proposal and should be supported unanimously by all members of the House. It talks about honest accounting. When we talk about separating the cost away from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, that's an honest accounting provision that the government should address.

We're also talking about a public review, which should lead to looking at the farm tax issue in a different way so that it redresses the tax inequity that is inherent in the existing system.

The objective of this resolution is to maintain our capacity to feed ourselves and to ensure the economic survival of rural Ontario. This is an important resolution. All members should support it today. I want to compliment once again the member for S-D-G & East Grenville for putting this forward.

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): As I'm shuffling some paper here, I want to take a few moments to answer the resolution of the member for S-D-G & East Grenville. I don't think anybody in this House in any way doubts his great concern for agriculture. He is a great advocate and I know a great supporter of ethanol. I know that he's well aware of a range of problems that exist in agriculture, not only in his own area in eastern Ontario but in mine, and he's visited with local farmers. So he's well aware of the situation. I appreciate it that as a critic he takes that kind of time to really inform himself of the issues far beyond his own area.

What I will counter with—and I will not at this point support this particular motion, though I do know where his resolution is coming from, because I think there are some things that have happened in Niagara which his resolution doesn't recognize and obviously can't because he's really dealing with a larger provincial issue. It really relates to the fact that I personally believe there are some things that have happened locally, through the municipalities and through the school boards, that really have improved the lot of the rural community as well as the urban community.

I know that there's a lot of frustration with our regional government situation. A lot of people don't necessarily like regional governments across the province. But the fact of the matter is that as a result of the regionalization within Niagara, the services that the rural community gets are the same as the urban community. Roads have been paved, the police department has been regionalized and people have access to these services in a way that they did not have when they were their own separate little communities. As a result, I

think the farm community has benefited in the same way as the urban community has.

When I look at the Lincoln county school boards, both the public and the Catholic board, I'm aware of the kinds of efforts that they have undertaken to ensure that both urban residents as well as rural residents receive the kinds of services to which they are entitled as a result of their tax dollars.

In the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara District Secondary School is in fact the performing arts high school for all of the Lincoln county board. Now, under those circumstances, one wouldn't expect that a rural community would have a performing arts centre, but in fact it does. I think we have to recognize that in some respects there are differences within rural communities, and for that reason I cannot support this motion.

1040

I would also say that the Fair Tax Commission has done a lot of work with regard to what the member is putting forward. As someone who is supporting the Fair Tax Commission and its work, I think I have to say that when a commission like that says in one of its recommendations that it wants to retain the farm tax rebate program, or develop an equivalent program, it really says a lot for the recognition throughout the province of the fact that farming is an important factor of our economic life.

I really do think we have to give the commission and this government credit for the fact that it does recognize the value of farm land. I know, just for my residents who might be watching, that there is still work going on in the conservation easement question that is very much in the minds of farmers in my area. I support it and I know that many members of this House also support it, including the Premier.

I will yield the rest of the time to one of my other colleagues, the member for Perth.

Mr Eddy: I too rise and appreciate the opportunity to speak to the member for S-D-G & East Grenville for presenting this resolution, because I support it, and very strongly. I agree with most of his views, except of course for some of those regarding the Liberal government and my predecessor Bob Nixon. I'm prepared to tell you why.

Going back, I well remember when the Conservatives started to initiate the program. The original plan was to pay the tax on farm land, to reduce the education tax on farm land, directly to the municipalities. There was a revolt by the farmers, and indeed OFA, because they said, "If the province pays the taxes, who will own the farms?" Imagine the concern that the farmers of this province will have when they learn that the NDP government has even considered assuming ownership of all farm land in Ontario and leasing it back to farmers. I think there will be tremendous concern. Certainly

there will be by me.

I have to just speak briefly to the Liberal initiative under the previous Liberal government, because the thrust there was to eliminate the farm tax rebate on land owned by developers, a great deal of which had been rezoned for development but was used for farming purposes. Why? Well, to get the farm tax rebate. That was a very substantial cost and so it was eliminated and the rule was used: farmers whose main income was from farming.

I well know about this change because I personally suffered that particular year under that program. However, it did result, of course, in a first surplus for the province of Ontario in 24 years. In 1989-90, there was a \$100-million surplus, the first and I hope not the last we've seen in Ontario. I just wanted to clarify that particular item. As I say, I do support the member's initiative and this resolution because something had to be done. I have no problem with it being an OMAF program as long as the amount of money is a separate budget item and it's there.

Why am I concerned about the present system? Well, OMAF is being drastically restructured—we know that—and there's less service for farmers—that's very apparent. The agricultural research funds are being drastically reduced, and this will have terrible repercussions in the agricultural industry because research is the heart of all development and progress and is very, very important.

We note that the OMAF budget is being substantially reduced each year by the government. Indeed, I believe last year or the year previous was the first time in many, many, many years that the budget for the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food had been reduced.

Another great concern is the fact that the farm tax rebate this year has been capped. This means that farmers in those municipalities that have seen an increase, and there are many—and there have been various reasons given for that. Some of it is down-loading of services and more regulations in certain respects, and of course that results in greater cost. Therefore, some municipal budgets have increased. So the capping will seriously affect, I believe, if not the farmers in those particular municipalities, farmers right across the province, because the pot in effect has been reduced. I know the government says it's been capped, but that means reduction if the costs go up. That is very bad and it's a great concern.

The other matter of course has been mentioned, that this farm tax rebate program is a year-by-year decision and that it's time the matter was cleared up once and for all, have a program and have it as an initiative that's there and an ongoing thing and not have people wondering and rumours continuously circulating: "What are we going to do this year? We're not going to get the farm tax rebate and it's the end for us."

The other thing I have to bring before you is to mention that in some municipalities, there are two upper tiers. The county of Brant and the region of Haldimand-Norfolk, both of which are partly in my riding of Brant-Haldimand, have a different system to the other upper-tier municipalities in this province that have been reassessed at market value assessment. In Brant and Haldimand-Norfolk, the farm tax assessment is at a higher value than residential properties. It's been separated. The factor is higher, with higher taxation; a farm house on a farm pays higher taxes than a residential property, and with increased taxes, this means they're at an extreme disadvantage. I don't know that this is generally known. It's the only two upper tiers in the province that are that way, and I beg the government to change that system.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I welcome this opportunity to comment briefly on this important resolution from the member, a colleague from the PC caucus from Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry and East Grenville, who has been our agricultural critic for many years and who has done a fantastic job in that portfolio; well aware of the concerns of the farmers in Ontario.

This resolution calls on the provincial government to "list the farm property tax rebate as a budget item separate from the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food" and to "initiate, with farm and municipal organizations, a thorough and public review of the taxation of producing farm land with the aim of maintaining a viable agricultural industry and family farms in Ontario."

I'm going to support this resolution, because, as a dairy farmer in Oro township, I know the farmers are ready, willing and able to pay their fair share of property taxes, provided that everyone else is taxed in an equitable and fair manner.

Most people in this province have a problem with the taxation of farm land. The problem is that the taxes on farms are out of proportion to a farmer's ability to pay and out of proportion to the services they receive.

Under the current government, the province of Ontario is mired in financial difficulties. The NDP has frozen the farm property tax rebate under the current government. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food's share of the provincial budget has been reduced to less than 1% of the total budget.

The NDP argues that given the serious fiscal situation the government faces with declining revenues and large deficits, ministry budgets must reflect this, and the NDP suggests that farmers experiencing financial difficulties can avail themselves of safety net programs.

I would respectfully submit that the NDP is out in left field on this and many other important issues. Overall, there is lower provincial expenditure on agriculture and food in Ontario as a percentage of the ag

and food gross domestic product than in other major food-producing provinces. The NDP fails to recognize that as Ontario's second-largest source of economic activity, agriculture unquestionably ranks as a priority.

1050

When the NDP froze the property tax rebate, it demonstrated that it declines to include our farmers in its long-term vision of the future. Farmers are struggling to survive in an economic system that does not treat them fairly or equitably.

I will be supporting this important resolution because it's time for this government to realize it is obligated to collaborate with its agricultural and rural community to ensure productivity and fair distribution.

Any modern province that fails to protect and promote its agricultural community is headed for big trouble. A province that is not reasonably self-sufficient and secure in its production of food and the preservation of the rural way of life risks losing a precious measure of independence, security and prosperity.

I thank the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry for bringing this important resolution to our attention. I urge all colleagues here in this Legislature to support it.

You know, we have been promoting ethanol. Why isn't the ministry full force behind this great promotion? Our ag budget is down, the lowest in history. The minister, I don't think, has any input around the cabinet table. The question is: Where does our food come from? The question needs to be asked.

If we help our farmers, we can build new towns. If we kill our farmers, grass will grow on the streets. Basically it's an indication of what this government's attitude is towards our agricultural community. I'm not so sure it is as forceful as I would like to see it, but I commend the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry for bringing this resolution through.

It's great to see my two granddaughters here—the one who's still on the farm—watching their old grandpa today have a few words to say.

Mrs Karen Haslam (Perth): I will try and be as brief as possible. Everyone knows I could speak 15 minutes on farm and agricultural issues but, given two minutes, I'll try and put it in as quickly as possible.

We're talking about a farm tax rebate. Sometimes I think people out there don't understand that this is not—I actually had somebody say to me that they thought it was welfare for farmers. It is not. It is a rebate of the taxes they pay, but it's a rebate on unserviced land.

As to the resolution before us, I would like to say that the farm property tax rebate has already been treated as a separate budget item from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food as a base budget under the recent expenditure control plan. When setting targets for the

plan, the Ministry of Finance exempted the farm tax rebate program from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food's base budget. Had the program been included in the expenditure plan, the ministry would have had to contribute far more than the \$52.9 million or 8% of the budget that was actually contributed.

As members may know, the issues surrounding farm property taxes and property taxation generally are complex and challenging; issues that have been around for more than 20 years. The objective of the original farm tax rebate which was introduced in 1970 was to help ensure that taxes were paid in proportion to the benefits of services received on the property. Given that farm land did not require educational services provided from educational taxes, the idea was to relieve farmers of what was perceived as an unfair financial burden.

A 25% rebate for farm property and residence was set up at that time which was about the same as the educational tax assessed on farm land and buildings. Since then the program has gone through many changes. The rebate levels and rules of eligibility have been adjusted several times to reflect changing circumstances. Under the current program, the rebate level is at 75% excluding farm residences. We recognize that farmers continue to be concerned about the fairness of property taxation on their farm land.

We know that farmers are going through a tough period right now. We realize that this is not only a farm policy issue but also a farm land taxation issue. That's why last summer the Minister of Agriculture and Food asked the Minister of Finance to direct the Fair Tax Commission to include farm property tax issues in its deliberations. I look forward to that report.

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I welcome the opportunity to speak in support of my colleague from Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry and East Grenville, who has been our agricultural spokesman in eastern Ontario for a good number of years. I know in my constituency offices, when there's a farm issue and there's a good deal of discussion on any of the issues, often times the discussion ends with: "And what does Noble Villeneuve think of this? What is his position on this?" So our colleague is recognized I know in eastern Ontario as being a strong voice for agriculture.

I think this morning, after listening to the previous speakers, I would just like to dwell for a few minutes on the history of this so-called farm tax rebate. As the member for Perth said, using the term "rebate" to me is very demeaning to what this taxation problem really is.

Relative to that, as long as this so-called tax rebate policy is left in the hands of the minister and the cabinet, it's continually going to be fluxing here and changing there. I think it's time, in support of my colleague's resolution, that this problem was brought here to the Legislature and we actually legislated the future of farm land relative to its base of taxation.

They have the old saying, "If it isn't broken, don't fix it." My experience across rural Ontario was that the present way of dealing with it was fairly acceptable to the people. They were paying full tax on their residence and one acre of land. The farm buildings and the farm land were exempt from the taxation. The administrative workload and paperwork involved to send in these forms and have the money sent back out, to me, is quite unnecessary.

The problem seems to be that the government and the committees that different governments have set up have not been able to define what a farm operation is. They've used gross income, they've used many guidelines to try to define a farm. I think this definition should be becoming more clear to the government daily as it moves ahead with its stabilization fund, because in establishing that stabilization fund across the province for the farmers, it is in fact going to establish a definition of what it's going to agree is a farm operation.

When they do that, I would like to see it then in legislation in this House, so that it can't be changed by regulation of cabinet just depending on how much money is left in the minister's budget. This has been going on for a number of years: If they were looking for more revenue, they took a look and said, "Oh, we're giving too much here in a rebate."

I think it's time that changed and that we actually accept the fact that a family farm is the basis not only of rural Ontario but of Ontario. It will be a sad day for the cities and towns if we allow the rural heart of Ontario known as the family farm to disintegrate. To ask the family farm operation to pay a tax for services not rendered is really not acceptable to the future of the business.

I would like to say that the Sewell commission, for instance, going around rural Ontario, couldn't understand or wasn't able either to define a farm operation, but in going around the province, it was able to identify the fact that when we had straight rural Ontario, the needs of the farmer were very basic and the services required were basically roads, snowplowing in the wintertime and other needs that were very basic to living there. All the operations on the farm were sustained by the owner and operator of the farm. His water supply, his sewage system, you name it; it was up to him to maintain that. He was no load whatsoever to the municipality and therefore the taxation was relative to that. After the severances and the septic systems became common throughout the province and we had the development of rural Ontario, that responsibility changed.

1100

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Villeneuve, you have two minutes.

Mr Villeneuve: I certainly want to thank all of my colleagues from all sides and all parties. Government

members for Huron, St Catharines-Brock and Perth are very supportive of the farm tax rebate, and I thank them for that. It will be interesting to see how they vote. The Liberal members for Oriole and Brant-Haldimand, I certainly want to thank them. I think they show their understanding as well of the problems, the inequities that are inherent in the present tax system, and my colleagues in my own party, the members for Wellington, Simcoe East and Lanark-Renfrew, certainly very understanding of a situation that has to be corrected.

It's simply the correction of a major inequity. Farm land and farm buildings do not put any drain whatever, other than fire protection on the farm buildings—that's the only claim to the municipal taxes: fire protection on farm buildings.

Mr Jordan: And they're volunteers.

Mr Villeneuve: And those, in most instances, are volunteer firefighters with equipment owned by the municipality.

The roads are there to service the people who live in the homes. All of the other services are people services, and certainly education is a service to people.

So always bear in mind that we now have a frozen farm tax rebate. This government saved \$7.1 million by freezing it.

The Minister of Agriculture and Food this week, in reply to a question, said it will likely be a farm tax rebate not at 75% this year but at somewhere between 72% and 73%. Next year, that will drop again.

I am simply looking to lock in the farm tax rebate at its 75%, that it is not a line item in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food: \$159 million there, a major inequity. It looks like farmers are sponging when indeed it's simply correcting the books.

I look forward to everyone supporting this motion.

The Deputy Speaker: The time allotted for the first ballot item has expired.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RETIREMENT
ALLOWANCES AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LES ALLOCATIONS DE RETRAITE
DES DÉPUTÉS À L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

Mr Kormos moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 53, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les allocations de retraite des députés à l'Assemblée législative.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the honourable member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold): At the outset, I'd like to indicate to you that I propose to dedicate a portion of the 10 minutes permitted me to the

member for Victoria-Haliburton, subject to unanimous consent by this assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? There is unanimous consent; therefore I will recognize the member for Victoria-Haliburton.

Mr Kormos: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I appreciate the cooperation of the assembly.

I feel especially honoured to be able to speak to this matter, not only because it's timely and it's significant and it expresses, in my view, the wishes of the people of Welland-Thorold, including a whole lot of folks in all other parts of this province, but honoured because we're doing it in the presence of two young women from just slightly north of here, the grandchildren of the member for Simcoe East, Crystle Cooper, who's from Waterdown school in Waterdown, and Jennifer McLean—McLean, of course, a familiar name to all of us—from W.R. Best school in Dalston. I'm sure they're as pleased to be here as I am this morning, and as pleased to watch their granddad at work as all of us are throughout the course of our sitting here.

I'm happy that this bill has an opportunity to be debated so soon after it was introduced for first reading on June 17, 1993. I know that after the introduction of Bill 53, my colleague the member for Windsor-Walkerville introduced a few weeks later a bill similarly reforming or amending the manner in which MPPs receive pensions. I'm not at all troubled by the fact that he introduced a bill as well, and I enjoyed and listened carefully to the debate that took place last week today, last Thursday, about that bill.

As a matter of fact, what's really remarkable is that, along with perhaps the common pause day Sunday shopping debate, was among the most non-partisan, legitimate and sincere debates that one has heard in this Legislature for perhaps a considerable period of time, if not perhaps for the whole history of this Legislature. That speaks, among other things, to the need for individual members, for any one of the 129 of us out of the 130 who are entitled to speak to matters, to be able to speak freely, independently and on behalf of our constituents.

Let me tell you very briefly and very simply, this isn't a complicated issue in so far as it's addressed by Bill 53. Right now we don't have to go through the horror stories about the cash for life, the gravy train that MPPs and, let me be fair, members of Parliament, because if you think the numbers are dramatic here at Queen's Park when it comes to entitlement to pensions for members of the Legislative Assembly, take a look at what federal members are receiving.

The issue having been dealt with, again, in a very different way in the province of Alberta, in a way that I would be modestly critical of, because I don't think it addresses the matter in a way that's entirely successful,

but the fact is, the Legislature of Alberta has addressed the issue of MPPs' pensions. This is an opportunity for Ontario to provide leadership throughout this country and to provide some direction for what seems at times a somewhat misguided, perhaps confused—who am I to talk about confusion?—federal Legislature that has ignored the issue practically in that it has not done anything meaningful to reform MPs' pensions. I tell you once again, the numbers there are phenomenal. The numbers here in the province are, at the very best, embarrassing. The numbers at the federal level are phenomenal.

What this bill does in a very succinct way is simply this: It limits eligibility for members of the Legislative Assembly to pensions to those who've achieved the age of 60 years. It's a very simple proposition. In my view, it's a very commonsense proposition. I submit that it puts MPPs' pensions very much in line or somewhat closer to the reality of the real world.

The fact is that most working people here in the province of Ontario don't have any pension eligibility whatsoever—none. Talk about people who do real work in real workplaces, who make things and who make things happen, and I tell you, most of those working people in the province of Ontario have no pension eligibility. We indeed are blessed and we are part of a very small segment of the Ontario population to have any pension eligibility whatsoever.

I propose to yield the floor now to the member for Victoria-Haliburton, trusting that I will be able to rejoin this debate during the 15 minutes allowed subsequent to the introduction of the motion by the member.

The Deputy Speaker: I'd just like to advise the House that I will recognize Mr Drainville immediately, instead of going in rotation, because it is part of the 10 minutes which is normally allocated to the member when he presents his bill.

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I thank the honourable member for yielding the floor to me to speak about this very important bill of public administration. The issue has been raised for a long time in the public about the remuneration and the pension benefits that we receive as members of Parliament.

There's no question that we live in a time and a place where there is great scrutiny on how we spend the public purse, and I think that's appropriate. There's no question that we as politicians have to be responsible for the moneys that we spend. There's no question, as well, that as we look through the whole panoply of programs and projects that are in the government what we see in fact is that there are moneys that are not all that well-spent.

Today we deal with this bill that has been brought forward by the honourable member for Welland-Thorold, a bill which essentially is a very simple bill,

and what it says in principle is that members of Parliament should receive their pensionable benefits at the age of 60. If you put that into context, it makes great sense. Why should a member of Parliament receive a healthy pensionable benefit at the age of 40 or 42 or 43?

1110

We need to look a little bit at the history of how this came about. It's not that many years ago, maybe 20 years ago and before, when the average age of a member of Parliament in this place was about 45 or 50 years of age. In a sense, this kind of pension scheme was established as a means of supporting members of Parliament who took their prime earning years and gave that up to public life. So 20 or 30 years ago, you would see members in this House who would be members who were greying. Their hair was grey; they were older people; they were giving a great deal of their career years up to public service.

What we see now is that there has been a real change in the character of politics in this province and in the kinds of people who come here to this House. We see members who are in their early 20s, we see members who are in their late 20s and early 30s, and that changes substantially the kind of pension you have. There's no question that we now are beginning to realize that we can't have the same kind of pension plan today that we had 20, 25, 30 years ago, so this is a very timely bill that's being brought forward by the member for Welland-Thorold.

I just want to touch on another issue, and that is, we live also in an age of great cynicism and negativity, when people looking at politicians and the political system have doubts about the wisdom of spending the amount of money that it costs to keep the political institutions, the democratic institutions, functioning. I have to say that, again, there is need for critique, there is need to look at the way money is spent in those institutions.

But in acknowledging the need for us to change the present pension scheme and ensure that members should get that pension at an appropriate age, such as 60, as in this bill, we also have to say that it is important that the right of having a pension after serving years in this House should be reaffirmed. Not a lot of people will end up benefiting from this. If you look at the last Parliament, a huge number of members left this House after the last election who did not walk away with any pension. So there are many people in this House now who will probably never receive a pension.

But if the people of those respective ridings continue to support their member and that member is re-elected and re-elected and gives a great deal of time to those people and to public service, it is appropriate that the person receive a pension which is appropriate to the years of service that he or she has given to the public. So I want to reaffirm that principle and say to the

honourable member for Welland-Thorold, I thank him very much for bringing this bill forward and for again bringing this issue into focus for the people of Ontario.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I'm very pleased to rise in support of the member for Welland-Thorold's private member's bill. We had the opportunity just last week to vote as well in favour, in our caucus, of the bill put forward by the member for Windsor-Walkerville, I believe. A member of our caucus, the member for Halton Centre, has introduced a private member's bill which we're going to support as well.

I think it's important to look at these issues in context. I think some facts about the background of the extent and scope of the problem will give a little flavour to what we're dealing with. Really, I think the issue is one of perception, of telling the public that it's important that they see their politicians being responsive to the economic times, and I think this is one of those issues.

I'm not quite prepared to indulge in some of what might have been the self-flagellation about politicians that some of the speakers in favour of this bill have participated in; I think politicians do real work, at least certainly the best ones.

There are 174 past MPPs who are drawing pensions. The average age of those former members is 65. The average pension is \$23,000 a year. I think when you start looking at it in that context, the real pensions are not that rich and it's not that inappropriate at 65.

What we're trying to do and what this bill is attempting to do, and our caucus support it, is get rid of those circumstances where there is seen to be unfairness, where people who are quite young are entitled to a full pension at a very early age.

One thing this bill does not address, which our caucus supports as a position of course, is the whole issue of double-dipping, and I think there may be a real concern there and one that I support. I can think of certain members of the government caucus or former government party I guess, more appropriately, who have a pension from this House, in fact a pension from the federal House as well, and are currently on the government payroll. I think that's inappropriate. That's the kind of thing that should be addressed, and to be fair there are people in each party who are in that circumstance and we should legislate to try and attempt to get rid of that.

I think we should have a new plan for a new Parliament. The leaders of the parties have to get together and do that, and they've agreed, and I think it has to happen. As I said, the principles have to be that we need to address the problem of people being able to retire at a young age with a substantial pension, and I think we have to look at the issue of double-dipping. Those are the issues I think that need to be addressed for the public.

I know the member for Welland-Thorold made reference to the Alberta situation, and I think it was highly appropriate that situation was addressed. Alberta had a very substantial and rich pension plan, in fact I think one of the richest in the country. I'm not sure how it competed with the federal pension plan, but it may in fact even have been richer.

But I think this is an important issue. I think of myself, for example. I am a relatively young member and I think it's inappropriate that I could retire in eight or nine years and be able to draw a pension at that age. I too will make the commitment that if that circumstance arises and the electors of St George-St David are kind enough to re-elect me in a few subsequent elections I would defer that pension if I'm under the current plan. If we're under a different plan, then I will live with those provisions, and I make that commitment here.

But I think it's also important to look at the opportunity that we have presented. If you look at the age of members and the length of service, more importantly, because I think that's the real criteria, that average length of service has dropped substantially. In parliaments in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and even the early 1980s, the length of service was in double digits. It was around 12 years. People came into this Parliament and served for a long time and retired.

In many cases people retired without having real access to the pension benefits, and in fact when you think about the fact that for each Parliament 130 people are elected to this assembly, the fact that there are only 174 members currently drawing a pension is not a substantial number. But the interesting thing to note through the last number of years is that the average length of service in this Parliament has dropped substantially.

My friend from Renfrew North calls it a series of electoral decapitations, and I think that's an appropriate analogy if a bit flowery language. Far be it from me to participate in that kind of flowery language.

But if you look at it, for example in the Parliament in 1985, there were 44 people who had under five years of service. That number has more than doubled in this current Parliament. There are now 90 members, I believe, maybe 91 after my election in the by-election of April 1, who have under five years of service. It's important I think to note that none of those individuals, if they are defeated in the next election, will be qualified for the pension.

What we have is an entitlement that is seen to be unjust, frankly, which has no real application because most people can't take access to it. So we have a situation and an opportunity to really create a new circumstance that people can see us moving forward, and an opportunity for reform. I think we should take advantage of it, and that's why I'm pleased to support

this bill and our caucus will be supporting this and the other bills.

1120

I think, though, there are some issues we should also look at. The lowest pension paid right now is \$240 a month, so there are people who have been unjustly dealt with. I don't think \$240 a month is a very rich pension and I think there's a circumstance perhaps where there is an element of unfairness, because the tradeoff really in the way this system got developed was that people were paid pensions out of line with the private sector, I think it's fair to say, as compensation for what was viewed as lower pay. It was part of a package at the time where you traded off lower pay in the public service for a pension scheme.

I think it should be dealt with as a whole. We should look at the pay package and the pension package and reform it as a whole. There are many people out there who would be taking a substantial pay cut to serve in the public service as an elected member, and I think that's an unfortunate circumstance. We need to look at that because I think the best-quality people are the kind of people the public and all of us want to serve in this Legislature, and I think there is a real impediment in the salaries paid.

That is also an issue that's in the context of making sure that what is paid to members is clear and upfront and has no hidden elements to it, no tax-free allowances. It should be a whole, it should be clear to the public, and any expenses should be done by way of receipt so that it's clear and obvious to everyone what is being done.

I think it's those kinds of issues that raise a concern in the public mind, and those are the kinds of issues we should redress. I'm pleased to be able to support this private member's bill. I think, however, it's only part of the loaf, and I'd like to see the whole loaf.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I'm pleased to have the opportunity to provide a few brief comments on private member's Bill 53, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, which was introduced by my colleague the member for Welland-Thorold and received first reading on June 17, 1993.

With this bill, the member for Welland-Thorold wants to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act so that members retiring on or after January 1, 1993, would not be entitled to receive a pension until they reach the age of 60.

I never did approve of people that got pensions in their forties, and there have been several. I believe pensions are there for a purpose. They're there in the province of Ontario and other sectors for the purpose that when people are retiring, that's when they receive a pension, and not just because they're quitting one job

and going to another.

If a member dies, the surviving spouse would not receive a survivor's pension until the day the member would have turned 60 years of age. That's part of this bill. However, if the member left a survivor child or children but no spouse, the children would still be entitled to an immediate survivor benefit.

I am eager to comment on this type of legislation, because I've always shown a long-time interest in this type of legislative reform. It was just last week that I spoke on the member for Windsor-Walkerville's resolution with regard to private member's Bill 58, the Legislative Assembly Statute Law Amendment Act, and on private member's Bill 57, the Election Statute Law Amendment Act, because I believe the entire process is in need of a considerable overhaul.

You may no doubt recall that I asked for an all-party consent to have the member for Windsor-Walkerville's bill referred to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, and do you know what happened when I asked for that unanimous consent? Strangely enough, that same member was the first to object to my suggestion. In effect, he killed his own bill.

I've never seen such a show take place within this Legislature of bringing forward a bill to get some public debate and then ending up killing it. This cynical move on the part of the NDP member for Windsor-Walkerville leads me to believe that his party is not serious about reform and saving taxpayers' money. The NDP is only interested in publicity stunts.

Some of you may recall that during the late 1980s—*Interjection.*

Mr McLean: —well, he's not an NDPer—I introduced private member's Bill 73, which was An Act to amend the Public Service Superannuation Act, and private member's Bill 74, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act.

Now, my bills aimed at both elected officials and civil servants, and those bills would have ended the practice commonly known as "double-dipping," where people receive retirement pensions from the government while also being paid as a member of a government agency, board, commission or committee. I believe it is morally wrong and I believe there must be a return to fiscal responsibility and personal integrity in the ranks of elected officials and the senior civil service.

While I support private member's Bill 53 in principle, I have some concerns about the following: Would a long-time member who's still quite young, but who retires due to ill health and is unable to find alternative employment, have to wait until the age of 60 before receiving a retirement pension? That's why I liked the age of 55. The reason I liked the age of 55 is the fact that there are many people today who work for the civil service—there are police who retire, there are teachers

who retire, there are many of the OPP who retire and at the age of 55 collect their pension. Why are you saying now that, because you're an elected official, you can't collect yours until you're 60? That's where the member and I will disagree on the figures that are in it.

When this is referred to committee, this can be changed, depending on the input we receive from people who want to debate this. So those same concerns apply also to their surviving spouse, with regard to the age limit I've talked about. While I support the member's bill in principle, I do think it requires a bit more work.

I also believe members should not have a tax-free allowance. Their salary should be based on one salary and they pay tax on that full salary. I believe the Premier had the opportunity to do that in 1990, when they were first elected, and the public would have accepted that because of the fact they were doing away with the tax-free allowance that members get. I think that's proper and I think it's appropriate and I think members should have no free taxes on any part of their pay. They should pay on the total amount.

But I also think there's another aspect here that we're kind of forgetting. We have many senior civil servants who have been here for many years, who have retired, and they have expense accounts that nobody can get to see. They have salaries we can't get to see, unless we go through the freedom of information. At one time, it used to be in the book here in the Legislature that every salary over \$30,000 was published. I think it was proper to have that done.

The other thing, that the expenses of civil servants were published, I think is proper because many civil servants in this province have credit cards, they have expense accounts that nobody knows what the expenses really are. There are some that we see when we get the estimates books with regard to certain people, and I've seen some expenditures in there up to \$48,000. Grant you, it may be in the north where there's a lot of flying that the senior civil servant is doing, but there are many, many accounts in there that I sometimes wonder really where the accountability is.

When we look at and talk about elected people, I think we also should be looking at some of the senior civil servants which my bills, back at that time, looked at. We have many members who have left this House—and I remember when my bills were before this Legislature, there were many people who spoke opposing them. Some of those people today, like Michael Breaugh, who is now a member in the federal House, is receiving a pension from this Legislature and is also on the payroll in Ottawa.

I have an interesting letter here that I cut out of the *Star* last week. It says, "Re 'Millions of Reasons for Furor Over MPs' Pensions', June 20, in which you mention me as a 'prime example' of 'double-dipping'—collecting an MP's pension while working in the public

sector." This individual spent 21 years as a member of Parliament and he now receives a pension. He retired from politics in 1989. He is at the age of 54 and he wanted to continue working.

"After considering a number of possibilities, both nationally and internationally and in the private sector, I decided to accept the offer to become the first president of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development. I did so because I believe public sector work in the cause of international rights and democratic development is worthwhile both for Canada and developing countries. I now find myself accused by some of so-called sleazy 'double-dipping' because I accepted this job."

1130

This is what this individual wrote. This individual is making over \$100,000 a year in a salary paid for by the taxpayer. This individual is drawing a pension of probably \$60,000 a year, approximately. This individual is not ashamed to accept his pension.

My estimation always was that you take a pension when you're retired. This individual is not retired.

This individual is Ed Broadbent, president, International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development. This is from Montreal.

Here we have members of Parliament who thinks it's fine to accept their pension, and he's not 55 years old yet, and yet get \$100,000. That's just a typical example of an individual. I'm saying everybody is the same who is doing the same as he is, regardless of what party you're from. I just got that out of the paper, and that's why I read it. There were no others in there to pick out. Anybody else could write in and tell me the same thing, but I've never seen them.

There's lot of others, from all parties. There's Andy Brandt. There's all kinds of them.

Interjection: Elie.

Mr McLean: Elie Martel, George Samis. I don't know how many Liberals, but Bob Nixon was probably getting a good pension when he was in Europe.

Well, I don't agree with that and the public doesn't agree with it, and that's why we're having this debate here today, to try to bring some common sense back to the whole issue of pensions.

I believe that 55 is the right age, but I also believe that members should be paying taxes on everything. You can go on for a period of time with regard to this, but what I saw here last week certainly led me to believe that there's nothing really going to be done, because when the members indicated they supported the bill from the member for Windsor-Walkerville and then got up and stopped it from going to committee, they're playing games.

For those people out there who are listening and think we're really accomplishing something here with regard

to the pensions, I don't see it. The only way we'll know if we're going to accomplish anything is today when the member for Welland-Thorold's bill is passed and it's referred to a committee where we can have some full input into it, and I congratulate the member for Welland-Thorold for bringing—

Mr Kormos: Tell them to keep watching for 30 more minutes.

Mr McLean: Just keep watching. The people will, and they'll be watching when we vote on this to find out. I'm telling you, if it's not referred to committee, then these people are not serious about pension reform.

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): It's with some pleasure that I rise to speak to my colleague's bill. My colleague is a New Democrat, and he is fighting the issues New Democrats have fought for a long time, sometimes in not the most popular way.

These are difficult times in our province, and times when we as legislators act as leaders. We must act as leaders in meeting the challenges that we face in the public service.

Recently, we've heard of the Tory federal government being under some public scrutiny for abuses of the public purse. The former Prime Minister is treating himself to a king's ransom, some \$160,000 in a yard sale at the taxpayers' tab, and he'll have a handsome pension already, in addition to his salary in his law firm that he's going to so quickly. He is not going to lose from his many years of public service.

Some 25 of his cronies will be entering renewed careers with huge pensions. Politicians much younger than I am now will receive lifetime sinecures. One Carole Jacques, at the age of 32, will be receiving a \$24,000-a-year pension even if she's convicted of corruption, and I believe she may even spend some time in a publicly funded facility.

Mr Kormos: Does she still get her pension?

Mr White: She will, I think, yes, and that pension will be adjusted when she reaches the age of 60.

The Senate, a singularly useless body of old hacks, which costs the public purse immense millions every year, has recently been under attack for the audacity of granting itself even further allowances. As New Democrats, we traditionally have fought against the very existence of that singular body of patronage and called for a three A Senate: abolish, abolish and abolish. At this time, our federal leader, Audrey McLaughlin, is calling for a national referendum on the future of that institution.

Canadians have long been used to thinking of Ottawa as a sanctuary for abuse of the public purse by an irrelevant breed of jurassic porkers. Perhaps because of federal scandals with so many convictions and charges for corruption and past provincial private profits for politicians, the public still looks with its jaundiced eye

on our benefits.

Compared to the federal government, we have little in the way of perks. Even so, we should examine those that we do have. In regard to MPPs' pensions, something should be done to make them appropriate to the 1990s. We know that a member recently retired at the advanced age of 41. This man will have a \$48,000-a-year pension as he enters a full-time managerial position. The youngest former MPP pensioner is only 39 years of age. These are exceptions, as the member opposite mentioned. Most recipients of MPP pensions are of retirement years, yet the public deserves the assurance that we're not above the law, that those exceptions should not be tolerated and that we don't have pay privileges at their expense. The public has grown cynical of politicians and the way in which our privileges seem to be protected at their expense.

When I was first elected, I thought, like so many of my constituents, that MPPs had a fairly good pay package. I can well understand the cynicism the public feels, because I felt it myself. It was some time before I realized that the salary was in fact quite modest. Fair enough. All of us enter public life with a desire for public service, not for private profit. Still, it behooves us to make our compensation understandable, if not perfectly acceptable, to the public in general.

There are different kinds of privileges that we as members of provincial Parliament have. Members can rise on points of privilege. There are times when their ability to represent their constituents has been threatened. Parliamentary privilege refers to this privileged ability to represent the interests of the people of Ontario to the best of our ability. That's obviously a privilege that everyone can appreciate, understand and support.

We're also privileged to serve our constituents, to represent their concerns and to offer leadership within our communities. We may complain about the pressures of the job, and they're real, or the stressors; all of my colleagues are visibly much older than they were two and a half years ago, as I am. Even so, we enjoy the privilege of that leadership, we enjoy those tasks and we rise to the challenge that leadership now demands of us.

At this moment, that leadership involves eliminating ways in which we're different from other members of the public service, and not maintaining privileged pensions that are dramatically different and better than the rest of the public sector has. Privilege has several meanings for members of Parliament. Let's not allow one of them to be an illicit gain from public service.

At this moment, we're negotiating cost reductions in the pensions, wages and benefits that members of the public sector receive. It's only appropriate that we look seriously at the costs of those retirement allowances, as government members will be taking a leadership role in the social contract. The Legislative Assembly Retire-

ment Allowances Act came into existence a generation ago. That was a time when professional careers were much more stable than they presently are. A generation ago, working men and women could expect to spend their adult lives with only one employer. Now we all retrain and professionals go through job changes every five years, on average.

As I look at my colleagues, there's not one of them, not one of us here, who would long be unemployed in another arena. Frankly, the rules of a generation ago are no longer appropriate in the 1990s. Like every other worker, we're earning moneys towards a pension. We're putting moneys away. Like any other worker, we should look forward to an adequate retirement in our senior years, but no more than any other member of the public sector.

1140

Pension issues are hard-fought parts of collective agreements. Young men and women have struck for the pension benefits they won't see for long decades. Their families are hungry while they assert a claim upon the future.

We do not honour here those struggles by working men and women of the labour movement by continuing an easily gained privilege. We're asking other members of the public sector to join us in meeting the challenge of getting our deficit and debt down. That's an important and valid goal. We embraced this challenge a couple of years ago in terms of our salaries—they've been frozen for some time—just as we're asking the rest of the public sector to do now.

As members of provincial Parliament, we've had several years of wage freezes. Still, I think this bastion of privilege, a pension plan that rewards those who are still in the prime of their lives, should be changed. As a sign of our good faith to the public sector workers, we should go further with wage freezes, just as we have in the last few years. We should extend that at least until 1996.

In addition, we should amend the LARAA, the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, along the lines that my friend the member for Welland-Thorold suggests. Our pension should be no more generous in early retirement than those that OPSEU and CUPE members have. In fact, most municipal councillors have the same pension arrangement that their employees have under OMERS. There should be no public sector leader able to say to us that we have expensive benefit packages and privileges they do not share.

None of us need this extra form of compensation. We're all capable people, most in the prime of our lives, and those of us who are approaching retirement years should have that benefit of a full pension. But for the rest of us, we do not need, nor should we need, this form of extra compensation.

Let us be up front in suggesting that we can contribute to wage and benefit savings by trimming the costs of these pension schemes. Let's remove the expensive and outdated privilege and bring it to the table as we consider how we meet the challenges of leadership in the 1990s.

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I'm pleased to have the opportunity to share some thoughts with you on this very contentious issue. First of all, I'd like to commend the member for Welland-Thorold for bringing this bill forward. Since the issue was first raised, I have consistently maintained that an independent commission, such as the Commission on Election Finances, should review MPPs' pensions and make recommendations to make sure that those pensions are fair.

I don't believe that we should be the ones to formulate and decide on the matter, because I think we have a decided conflict of interest. It must be an independent body that makes the recommendations, because it is important to the public on the pension issue that the recommendations not only be fair but be seen to be fair.

Of course, in the final analysis, changes will have to be made by the Legislative Assembly, and we will have to vote on the issue, but at least if an independent body makes those initial decisions and recommendations, I believe the public will be more likely to think they are fair.

Now, having said all that, I'm nevertheless going to support the bill brought forward by the member for Welland-Thorold which makes changes to our pensions, the same as last week I supported the member for Windsor-Walkerville and the same as I will support the bill introduced by my colleague from Halton, Barbara Sullivan.

I support all of these bills, even though some of their provisions are quite different and even though they vary from bill to bill, because I think it sends an important signal. The signal is that MPPs themselves believe changes should be made.

There are some things I very strongly feel should be changed. I believe the age when MPPs receive pensions should be changed. I believe the provisions which allow double-dipping are totally unacceptable. There are changes like that which I will stand here today, even though I have a vested interest in it, and say I support. But the bottom line is that I hope passing second reading of this bill today will send the Premier a message that we want him to act and that he will ask the Commission on Election Finances to review the issue and come back with recommendations for reform.

You know, when I ran for Parliament, I didn't run because of the generous pensions, and I doubt that anyone in this chamber did. In fact, I didn't even know what my pension was until very recently, when the controversy erupted. All I know and all I knew, and this

was something I found out when I received my first paycheque, was that there was a deduction off the top of 10% of my salary as a contribution to the pension fund. I knew I was going to get a pension at the end of it, but if I listen to the media's version, I would believe that I could leave Queen's Park today, after six years, and get an astronomical pension.

They reported things such as, "MPPs can leave Queen's Park after five years with a pension of up to \$60,000 a year for life." Talk about raising your hopes. Another article said, "Currently MPPs can start receiving lifetime pensions of up to 75% of their salaries immediately upon leaving politics, with as little as five years in the Legislature." If a member of the public listened to this, then they would believe that the member for Eglinton, if she walked away from this place today and resigned, would have an annual pension of \$60,000, or at least a minimum of \$30,000. The facts are that if I didn't run for a third term, after serving for eight years, my pension would be around \$11,000 to \$13,000 a year. In fact, I wouldn't be able to collect it for a while, because it's one of the few places in life I can say I'm still not old enough.

Having said that, they may not be astronomical figures, but the pension is very generous. We have to ask ourselves the question, why? Why are MPPs' pensions so generous? I believe it's because the salaries were too low, so this was their way of doing it through the back door to provide the compensation and making it up. If you look at Ontario MPPs, they're paid \$44,000, and then there's the tax-free allowance of almost \$15,000.

I compared that with other jurisdictions: It's \$25,000 less than federal MPs; it's \$15,000 less than senators. Mr Speaker, I won't tell you what I think of senators, because it undoubtedly would be unparliamentary, but let's just say I think the work we do has markedly more value than what the senators do. I'm not talking about the hockey team, either; I'm talking about those dinosaurs in Ottawa. I said I wasn't going to be unparliamentary, too.

It's \$11,000 less than what MPPs in Quebec get paid. It's \$5,000 less than what Metro councillors make. Our salaries are all of \$2,000 more than what MPPs in Newfoundland are paid. Don't get me wrong: I think Newfoundland is a wonderful province; I've got members in my immediate family who were born there. But the responsibility of administering a province like Ontario is decidedly different than in running Newfoundland.

There are lots of reasons I love this job. There are opportunities to meet interesting and marvellous people. There are opportunities to constantly learn, opportunities to fight for what we believe in, to say what we believe. It's always a challenge and rarely boring. It's sometimes very frustrating, but rarely boring.

But I can tell you, there are other times when this job, if I may be so blunt, is the pits. There are long hours. There are evenings and weekends that we work. There's a lack of privacy. We give up family time. There's public contempt, which I personally find extremely difficult to deal with when everybody says, "All politicians are scum." Sometimes it's very thankless, and we're constant targets of the media. Somebody said to me, "I'd hate a job where you had to smile all day."

It's an uncertain life. Out of the 50 new members elected to the Liberal caucus in 1987, 38 of them were defeated in 1990, not because they didn't do a good job but because people didn't like our leader. They didn't have any pensions. They had interrupted their careers and it was very difficult for them to get back. In our caucus, for instance, we have eight lawyers who could earn far more out in the private sector; we have business people and professionals who did. They've made a sacrifice.

What I'd like to say is that if we want to attract quality people as MPPs, who will interrupt their career path for public service, then surely it's important to make sure that MPPs are paid appropriately. Let's stop doing it by the back door. End the tax-free allowances, the perks, the per diems, reform the pension system and make sure we do it right.

1150

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville):

In the few minutes remaining for my party's time, I want to also participate in the debate, first of all to congratulate the member for Welland-Thorold for bringing forth a very timely topic. Ralph Klein, the Premier of Alberta, I think kind of won an election on a change of pension and pension reform.

I'm getting to be one of the old hands around here, Mr Speaker, as I guess maybe you are. You came here in 1984 and I came here the year before you, both in by-elections, and including those by-elections, we've both of us fought four elections in 10 years. It was always interesting, because your party was on the rise for a while and I came in at the decline of the Tory dynasty. As I look back, in 1983, when I was first elected, it was as the 73rd member of the governing party at that time; 17 members remain in this chamber. As I say, four elections, and not easy elections for Tories, you may have noticed. However, some of us survived.

The pensions need to be reformed—I don't think there's any doubt about that—and I will be supporting the member for Welland-Thorold's bill this morning. However, I think some adjustments should be made. Possibly 55, as my colleague from Simcoe East mentioned, is maybe a more acceptable age than 60.

However, as we go back and look at the elections that have occurred in 1985, 1987 and 1990, approximately

50% of the members here did not return, either by voluntary retirement or constituent-forced retirement.

It's amazing. The member for Eglinton mentioned some of the misleading information that was provided in the newspapers, that you're here five years and you get a \$60,000-a-year pension. That is certainly far from the truth. It is very misleading, and perception becomes reality. It's very easy picking to go after elected politicians; we live in fish-bowls.

Eight days a week sometimes isn't enough in your calendar or mine, and we fought like the dickens to get re-elected. That's fine. We accept what goes with that. I don't think anyone is here because of the salary. We're here for a cause. Frustrating as it may be from time to time, we still work towards a cause: to better the conditions of the people we attempt to represent. It's not always easy, either in opposition or even on the back benches on the government side. Frustration does set in from time to time; as long as rigor mortis doesn't set in.

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): That's the Senate.

Mr Villeneuve: That's the Senate.

However, in closing—and I have very few seconds left—I will be supporting the member's bill today. We look for some reform because perception is reality, and the public perception out there through misleading media information is making us look like we are using the system.

Mr Mark Morrow (Wentworth East): I want to thank the member for Welland-Thorold for bringing this Bill 53 forward. I will be supporting it later today. I also want to thank the member for Windsor-Walkerville for bringing his bill forward last week.

I think this starts talk about legislative reform as far as remuneration and as far as expenses, per diems etc that we get. I know other members around the House have alluded to that this morning.

Last Wednesday afternoon, the member for Welland-Thorold and I were lucky enough to be on 900 CHML, the Roy Green show, where we talked about legislative reform as far as remuneration and expenses go. What most people told us is that they think an MPP makes a good salary, that it's not a bad salary, but they would like to see the reforms come in where, say, things are not hidden in expenses, things are not hidden in per diems, that we maybe roll it all into one so it's very upfront, so that people around the province understand what we're getting.

That's just one issue, and I think these pension reform bills are starting to address that issue. A lot of people think that after five years, as the honourable member for Eglinton pointed out, we're pensioned off at \$60,000 or we get 75% of what we've made for the past five years.

It's an issue that touches home to me because I was elected September 6, 1990. I was 30 years old. If I'm lucky enough to last until I'm 45, if I'm privileged enough that the people in Wentworth East allow me to last until I'm 45, I'll be here for 15 years and get a pension of roughly \$30,000. It just seems a little ludicrous and crazy; people in the private sector don't get that. They have to wait till they're 60 or 65 and properly pensioned off.

It's something we should be a little realistic about. I know I talked to seniors in my riding: Jake Isbister; I've talked to Ken Gamble, Bill Gamble. I've talked to councillors in Stoney Creek: Maria Pearson. They don't seem to understand the issue. They don't seem to understand that they have to work for 35, 40, 50 years and their pensions aren't as good as ours. That's a real shame. They don't get it; we don't get it.

Earlier this week, I was talking about legislative reform as far as remunerations and expenses go, and I had decided that I would give up my apartment. It was kind of sad that I got openly and publicly criticized by a member of the House for doing that. That's just a sad issue and I'm not going to say much more on that. I was really taken aback that this happened. That's something we have to address; that's something we have to be very serious about.

We're asking the public service to be serious about cutbacks, about \$2 billion worth, and we're asking the people of the province of Ontario to be serious; we've increased taxes. I think it's about time that we got serious and did exactly the same thing, to show them that we're in the lead and that we're starting.

I know I have roughly two and a half minutes left and I know the honourable member for Welland-Thorold gave the member for Victoria-Haliburton some time. I would like to give some of my time that I have left back to the honourable member for Welland-Thorold.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

Mr Kormos: Obviously, I'm in a position where I wrap this up with the two minutes that are permitted me.

A little bit of talk about double-dipping: Quite rightly, the remarkable thing about the formula in Bill 53 is that it effectively deals with double-dipping without having to worry about definitions and what constitutes a second salary or a primary salary because of the fact that it requires that a person be 60 years old before she or he be eligible for a pension.

One of the problems with laying out a formula and defining what double-dipping means is that there are always going to be exceptions, and then there is going to be litigation and arguments about, "Am I in a public service job or am I not in a public service job?" I don't

care whether you're in a public sector or a private sector job. You still shouldn't get your MPP pension until you're 60 years old. There's nothing miraculous about that. There's nothing mysterious about that.

As a matter of fact, one of the problems around here is that this Legislative Assembly is cloaked with this mystery. We speak some of our own language, and so much that takes place here is done, in terms of the viewpoint of the public, so secretly and mysteriously and sometimes magically. Let's open the doors to this joint. Let's lay the cards on the table. Let's open the books. Let's make sure that people in this province who pay for this government, who pay for the good things in this province, understand where the money comes from and how that money's being spent.

Some talk about the event of members falling ill, becoming ill or injured to the point where they can no longer work. Let's not confuse a pension plan with a long-term disability plan. Let's talk about an LTD. I'll tell you this: I'm going to be proposing to you that this bill, if it succeeds, if it's passed, be referred to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly. We've got to get the ball rolling: no more studies, no more deferrals, no more shelving things in dusty, dark back rooms. Let's get the ball rolling in a public, open, standing committee so the discussion can begin in a three-party manner.

The Deputy Speaker: We still have two minutes.

Mr Kormos: Thank you. I sat down so you could tell me I had two minutes, Speaker. Far be it for me to offend the rules or not abide by protocol. I'm extremely conscious of the need for that.

Look, this bill, like the latter bill of the member for Windsor-Walkerville, is a starting point. I appreciate the comments about the need for perhaps having an independent body assess these things and deal with them in an omnibus fashion: pays, salaries, per diems, perks. Perhaps that's the point this should happen at in terms of real recommendations, but let's let the Legislative Assembly committee deal with that. Let's let the Legislative Assembly committee hear presentations about the process that might be followed, a public process of presentation and a public process of debate within the Legislative Assembly committee, because—the member talked about the need—regardless of what an independent body decides or recommends, ultimately members of this assembly have to make a political decision. That may mean rejecting a set of recommendations from an independent body that is overly generous with taxpayers' dollars. The bottom line is that there has to be a political decision made.

So I say this: I appeal to members of the assembly to support this bill. I also say this: Don't let this bill become mere window dressing. Let's get the process going. Let's refer this to the Legislative Assembly committee so that there can be an honest and legitimate,

bona fide, above-the-board addressing of the issues by all the members of this assembly and by members of the public. That's where it can take place, not in committee of the whole and not deferred over to some dark, dusty shelf in a back room or in the basement of this joint.

The Deputy Speaker: The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

TAXATION OF FARM LAND

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): We will deal first with ballot item number 21, standing in the name of Monsieur Villeneuve. If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Mr Villeneuve has moved private member's notice of motion number 19.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1202 to 1207.

The Deputy Speaker: Will the members please take their seats.

Mr Villeneuve has moved private member's resolution number 19. All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until your name is called.

Ayes

Arnott, Beer, Callahan, Cunningham, Drainville, Eddy, Grandmaitre, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Kormos, Kwinter, Marland, McLean, Murphy, Poole, Villeneuve.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please rise and remain standing until their names are called.

Nays

Cooper, Duignan, Frankford, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Haslam, Hope, Huget, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Malkowski, Marchese, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Morrow, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Rizzo, Sutherland, Waters, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Wilson (Frontenac-Addington).

The Deputy Speaker: The ayes are 16; the nays are 25. I declare the motion lost.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES ALLOCATIONS DE RETRAITE DES DÉPUTÉS À L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): We will now deal with ballot item number 22 standing in the name of Mr Kormos. If any members are opposed

to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Mr Kormos has moved second reading of Bill 53, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1210 to 1215.

The Deputy Speaker: Will the members please take their seats.

Mr Kormos has moved second reading of Bill 53. All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until their names are called.

Ayes

Arnott, Beer, Callahan, Cunningham, Curling, Drainville, Duignan, Eddy, Grandmaître, Harnick, Harrington, Huget, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Kormos, Kwinter, Malkowski, Marchese, McLean, Morrow, Murphy, North, O'Connor, Poole, Rizzo, Villeneuve, White, Wiseman.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until their names are called.

Nays

Cooper, Frankford, Hansen, Haslam, Hope, Johnson (Prince-Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Murdock (Sudbury), Sutherland, Waters, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands).

The Deputy Speaker: The ayes are 28 and the nays are 15. I declare the motion carried. Pursuant to standing order 96(k), the bill is referred to the committee of the whole.

Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold): Mr Speaker, I ask that the bill be referred to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly so that it can be effectively worked with.

The Deputy Speaker: Shall the bill be referred to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly?

All those in favour of this question will please rise and remain standing.

All those opposed to this question will please rise and remain standing.

A majority of the House not being in agreement with the request of the member, this bill is referred to the committee of the whole House.

All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, I do now leave the chair. The House will resume at 1:30.

The House recessed at 1219.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TORONTO MOLSON INDY

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): On July 16, 17 and 18, the Toronto Molson Indy enters its eighth year as one of Canada's major sporting events. The Toronto Molson Indy has become Toronto's largest annual sporting event and last year attracted 155,000 people. Tourists from all parts of Canada and the United States converge on Toronto to view the races and participate in many of the other cultural and entertainment activities available in the Toronto area.

We are fortunate to have two Ontario drivers in the race. Both Scott Goodyear of Scarborough and West Hill's Paul Tracy have become stars in their own right, and Paul Tracy comes to the Toronto race after having won last week's race in Cleveland, beating such notable drivers as Emerson Fittipaldi and Britain's Nigel Mansell.

In conjunction with the race, the Molson Indy Festival stages events during a week-long celebration which raises money for children's charities. Since 1986, Molson Indy Festival events have raised in excess of \$700,000 for various charities including the Herbie Fund, Easter Seals, Marina Lodge Rehabilitation Centre and the Variety Club.

Indy car racing is also a testing ground which has led to some of the most significant developments and improvements in the automotive industry over the years.

I'm sure we all join in wishing the organizers a very successful and safe weekend.

GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): The people of Ontario are disillusioned with Ontario's NDP government. It has lost control of its agenda and is drifting aimlessly through the summer of 1993.

The government claims it extended the sitting of the Legislature because of a pressing need to proceed with its legislative agenda. I would respectfully submit that if the NDP government was really serious about getting some work done, they should have been back here on March 22, rather than delaying proceedings and hiding out for three weeks until April 13.

I suspect retailers have seen a marked increase in the number of telephone answering machines sold for the constituency offices of NDP members so those members will not have to face the music in their ridings.

The NDP members are unable to justify their anti-business, job-killing May 19 budget and its \$2-billion tax grab. The NDP members cannot defend their anti-labour social contract legislation that is a blatant attack on Ontario's education, health care, municipal

and public sectors. The NDP members are unable to explain the logic of their health expenditure control act that will have a profound negative impact on the ability to provide and receive the high-quality medical services people so demand.

The people of Ontario deserve nothing less than the best possible government comprised of honest and honourable men and women. Unfortunately the government's NDP members use telephone answering machines at their constituency offices and hide out here at Queen's Park to avoid facing the constituents who elected them in good faith. What a sad state of affairs.

NON-PROFIT HOUSING

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): As the July 30 deadline for the first wave of proposals under our government's Jobs Ontario Homes approaches, I'd like to take this opportunity to once again add my voice to the growing number of people who are convinced that non-profit housing needs to be a significant part of provincial housing policy.

Currently only 15% of our government's total annual housing expenditure is spent on non-profit housing, compared with 56% for shelter allowances and rent supplements. Yet unlike non-profit housing, shelter allowances are short-term solutions that do not create any new affordable housing. Rental subsidies function to keep private market rents too high and require increasing levels of funding as rents keep increasing. As mortgages are paid off over time, non-profit housing requires significantly decreasing levels of funding while maintaining permanent affordable housing.

One of the many groups applying for Jobs Ontario Homes is Alice Willow Co-operative Homes Inc. I wholeheartedly support their attempts to address the shortage of decent, affordable rental housing in my riding and in Acton in particular. As people in my riding learn more about what non-profit and cooperative housing means, more people are actively supporting these projects. Alice Willow Co-op, like many of the public and private non-profit corporations, will bring to its community much-needed, clean and attractive stable housing which is managed and democratically owned by the people who live there. I know their efforts will provide a very positive contribution to our community and I salute them for that.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Charles Beer (York North): Yesterday, the leader of the official opposition, Lyn McLeod, my colleague the member for York Centre, Greg Sorbara, and I met with members of York region council in Newmarket. We heard a story of frustration, frustration at how difficult it is to work with this government on the issue of the social contract.

The mayor of Newmarket, Ray Twinney, told us that he, together with his council and the town's employees, is convinced that they can come to a local agreement that will both save taxpayers' money and save jobs. They can do this by using common sense and by building on the positive relationships that exist in the town between council and Newmarket staff. Yet the appalling fact is that when Newmarket town officials asked government representatives if their local agreement would then allow the town to receive the full 20% reduction in their target, they were told no.

Local agreements can be made. Why won't the government offer local municipalities the same incentive they will provide to the whole sector?

The Liberal Party has argued consistently that the only way to bring about the goals and objectives of the government's proposed restraint program is to allow local communities to make local agreements.

I say to the Minister of Finance, now Ontario's paymaster, listen to what local municipalities, local school boards, local agencies of all stripes are saying: "Let us negotiate with our employees and we will meet the \$2-billion target and we will get fair and equitable agreements." Minister, when Newmarket's plan is sent to Queen's Park, say yes.

ORANGEVILLE MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): My lords and my ladies, pray pay heed: I rise to inform the House that this weekend the town of Orangeville hosts the annual Orangeville Medieval Festival. The medieval festival is the brainchild of a very special resident and artist, Lorina Stephens. Mrs Stephens has taken the medieval festival from idea to fruition, holding the first medieval festival last year, attracting over 20,000 visitors to Orangeville.

This weekend's events include a live chess match played out by children from school areas, a medieval feast on Saturday night featuring foods from the era, archery competitions and a live, full-contact jousting contest played out on horses.

Come visit the Norse encampment, an authentic recreation of the Norse landing on North American soil in the year 1000 AD.

The local museum will feature an exhibit of medieval coins and offer local walking tours of historic homes.

Orangeville will play host to the weekend events by opening up homes and businesses to people dressed in period costumes and lots of, "Good day, my lords and ladies."

Visit Orangeville this weekend and come spend a day 500 years ago.

JACQUELINE TUINSTRA

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): I rise today to pay tribute to a 14-year-old environmentalist from my riding, Jacqueline Tuinstra of Vineland.

This bright young teen recently participated in the United Nations Global Youth Forum in Colorado. Jacqueline was one of the 2,000 delegates from more than 40 nations. She was chosen from more than 300 applicants to be one of Canada's 20 delegates. Jacqueline was the only representative from the Niagara Peninsula among Canada's delegates, who range in age from 12 to 22 years.

While at the forum, she exchanged environmental concerns with young people from all over the world and she helped draft an environmental declaration to be presented at the United Nations General Assembly.

Most importantly, Jacqueline learned that people from different nations and cultures can work together to solve environmental problems.

Since returning home, she has written an essay about her experience and has spoken at elementary schools and at a local school board meeting.

I'd like to congratulate Jacqueline for the dedication she has shown to saving our environment from the excesses of the industrial world. We can only hope other young people follow her example.

1340

INCOME TAX

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): As predicted, I think the angry calls are now beginning to come to our offices as people in the province realize their provincial income tax went up July 1 by 11%. The average family in this province now is paying \$80 more a month in provincial taxes. If we don't think that's going to have a strong negative impact on the economy, we're very much mistaken. Eighty dollars a month out of the average working family in this province is going to have a real negative impact on the economy.

Just when I think we began to see the economy getting on its knees again, just when we saw a little bit of a faint heartbeat in the economy, there is no doubt this biggest tax increase in the history of the province is going to be like a cold shower on our economy. And just when the government acknowledged that the real unemployment rate in this province is 14%, just when we see almost three quarters of a million people out of work in this province, this is just the moment the government decides to take taxes up on the average family by \$80 a month.

I hope we're wrong, but I think we are going to see this cold shower stop our economic recovery right in its tracks.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): Last night, over 200 people attended a meeting in Mississauga organized by concerned families of the Tyndall Nursing Home to discuss Bill 101, which has made several changes to Ontario's system of long-term care.

Of primary concern is the new fee structure for accommodation in long-term care facilities. On July 1, Bill 101 added a user fee, or copayment, which can cost residents up to \$12 per day more. Many residents heard about the fee change just days before it took effect.

There has not been enough time to do the income testing that is needed to determine the amount of the user fee. As a result, all residents are being charged the maximum user fee, with rebates to come later. This is ludicrous when many residents simply do not have sufficient income to afford the full fee.

I hope this NDP government will adopt the resolution of the PC Health critic, Jim Wilson, which calls for a graduated, four-year implementation of the copayment. Why should residents pay their full share at once if the government has four years to pay its share of the funding increase?

Another major concern is that when the primary income earner in a family requires long-term care in a facility, there is no regard for the income needs of the spouse who remains in the family home. This is particularly compounded if that spouse has young children at home also. It is possible for long-term care payments to use up almost all of the family income.

Obviously, the Bob Rae government has given little thought to how it will implement Bill 101 so that long-term care is affordable, accessible and equal for everyone.

YM-YWCA AWARDS

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): It is my privilege today to pay honour to five Oxford county women who have made outstanding contributions to our community. The five will be recognized by the YM-YWCA of Woodstock at a banquet September 8. The organization decided to honour these women because they have made a significant contribution to society, to celebrate their achievements and to recognize their contributions as role models for women.

There are four award categories: advancement of agriculture, for a sustained and significant contribution to the improvement of the importance of agriculture; arts and culture, for a significant contribution or outstanding achievement in the visual, literary or performing arts; humanitarian service, for commitment to and involvement in social services programs or organizations within the community; and professional, innovator or entrepreneur, for outstanding achievement or innovation in entrepreneurial or technological endeavour.

Sharon Rounds, a Lakeside area farmer, won for advancement in agriculture. Jean Hillis, an Ingersoll resident and founding member of the Ingersoll Creative Arts Centre, won for arts and culture. Woodstock residents Marie Bowerman, a long-time volunteer in amateur figure-skating, and Wendy Calder, a former mayor of Woodstock from 1978 to 1985, won for

humanitarian service. And Frances Goff, a successful Woodstock business person, won in the professional, innovator or entrepreneur category. Unfortunately, time prevents me from giving even a brief outline of each woman's accomplishments.

Many people complain about the problems facing our communities, but all too few get involved in finding a solution or making some contribution that makes living here more pleasurable. These five women have made dramatic contributions over the years to Oxford, and I ask the members here to join me in congratulating them for their efforts.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): Let me begin with a point of order, Mr Speaker: It being time for oral questions, I just make the point that at quarter to 2 we have fewer than 15 members of the government bench; we have fewer than a half dozen ministers. It's one thing to have a million dollars worth of Hydro furniture go missing and the public accounts and the auditor for the province now in search of it, but at quarter to 2 on a Thursday afternoon, 75% of the treasury bench and the cabinet ought not to be similarly missing.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I can be of no assistance to the member other than to understand his concern.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I have two questions today on behalf of my colleagues, and the first question will go to the Finance minister, who's joining us as I speak.

Minister of Finance, it's now almost two months ago that you presented the Ontario budget for 1993. In that budget, tabled by yourself on May 19, 1993, you increased the tax burden on an annual basis on Ontario citizens by \$2 billion, and fully 50%, over \$1.1 billion of that total tax increase, is in the form of personal income taxes. My friend Gerry Phillips, the Liberal treasury critic, has just finished saying to the House that for the average Ontario family in the remaining part of this year their provincial taxes are going to increase on a monthly basis by about \$80, or a total increase this year of about \$500.

In light of those tax increases, which are now beginning to be paid by ordinary citizens in this province, I want to raise with the Minister of Finance a corresponding concern on behalf of the taxpayers all across Ontario, and that is how the provincial government, of which he is a central part, is spending the hard-earned money of beleaguered, embattled taxpayers.

This morning, we had released a Provincial Auditor's report on the Workers' Compensation Board building, the new building that the Workers' Compensation Board is determined to build. The Minister of Finance will

know that he and I discussed this issue in this House six months ago.

Does the Minister of Finance know that in the Provincial Auditor's report on the proposal for a new workers' compensation building for Ontario, a project just beginning in terms of its construction, the auditor has reported, among other things, that the board at the workers' compensation office wanted a new building so badly that they looked not very seriously at any other options?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Conway: Among other things, they have grossly overstated the savings that a new building would provide. Is the Minister of Finance, the architect of this \$2-billion tax grab which people are starting to pay on a daily basis now, aware of the report of the Provincial Auditor and the excesses which the Provincial Auditor has found in the proposed new WCB building?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): In view of the fact that this is a question directly associated with workers' compensation, I'll refer it to the Minister of Labour.

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): I haven't personally read the report as yet, but I want to simply say that the auditor does not indicate that there was not value for money in the project. I want to also make it clear that the recommendation that was brought to us by the board—I think it was in the first month or two that we were in office—clearly indicated that they had sought legal advice and had three legal opinions on the issue, and the legal opinions were that they had the right to go ahead and proceed with the building. It was following this that we decided we wanted an assessment of vacant property as well in the area, and that's when we had Royal LePage do the assessment of unused property in the city of Toronto.

Mr Conway: My supplementary is to the Finance minister, and it concerns the way in which his government is spending the hard-earned money of beleaguered taxpayers. The government members may not have read the Provincial Auditor's report but I have, and taxpayers will be reading it as I speak. The Provincial Auditor, a professional arbiter in these matters, has made a damning indictment of this particular expenditure of the public's money.

1350

I ask the Minister of Finance, on behalf of the taxpayers of the province, will he now, in light of this report, order an immediate halt to this boondoggle on a variety of grounds, not only the grounds that the auditor has found, but as some indication to the taxpayers who are saying to all of us they've had enough, and enough is too much, and that a genuine social contract for the taxpayers is that government will restrain excessive

public spending and surely the auditor's report on the new WCB building indicates plainly that this—

The Speaker: Would the member complete his question, please.

Mr Conway: —commitment of public funds is inappropriate and unwarranted and should be stopped now?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: It's not taxpayers' money, to begin with. The report clearly confirms that there is value for money in investing in this building, and that is what was the mandate of the Provincial Auditor. The report concludes that there will be a reasonable rate of return on investment.

Mr Conway: The final supplementary to the Finance minister on public spending concerns three more audits about spending in the department of the Solicitor General and particularly audits that concern themselves about community-based programs in the area of sexual assault, wife assault services and victim services.

These three audits, done by the government itself, of government programs indicate widespread misappropriation of public moneys, a clear indication that the Rae government in recent years has poured millions of dollars into these programs without laying a proper foundation, without proper accountability.

The audits, among other things, say that officials, publicly paid for people, are renting cars for long weekends and statutory holidays, have corporate credit cards running up thousands of dollars in personal charges, and there are no conflict of interest rules around hiring: three more audits in the area of the department of the Solicitor General that make plain to the taxpayers, now burdened this week with all of these additional personal income taxes, that the government is not doing a very good job in terms of spending and looking after the taxpayers' money.

In light of these audits, will you undertake today, with your colleague the Solicitor General, to deal with and to end the excesses and the misappropriations—

The Speaker: Could the member complete his question, please.

Mr Conway: —that are outlined in these three government audits?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I'm not sure what that has to do with the WCB building at all, and the only thing I can do with the question he's asking is to take it under advisement.

Mr Conway: I asked the question to the Minister of Finance in the area of government spending. We've got four audits here that indicate that the taxpayers, burdened with \$2 billion worth of additional taxes, are not getting value for money.

The Speaker: Does the member have a second question?

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): A new question is to the Premier. Every Ontarian I have ever met and certainly every constituent I represent believes that in this province and country, one of the most fundamental and cherished of rights is the right to be considered innocent until one is presumed guilty. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms makes plain in section 11(d) that this is a true right to be enjoyed by all Ontario residents.

I want to ask the leader of the government of Ontario, a distinguished member of the Ontario bar, to outline in this House today on behalf of his government what precisely are the views of the government of Ontario with respect to this particular right and freedom.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): Mr Speaker, I'll refer that question to the Attorney General.

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I'm happy to do as the member opposite requests and did so yesterday. Our position is very clear that people are indeed presumed innocent until they are proven guilty. There has never been any question that this is the government position in this province or indeed, I presume, that it would be the position of any government at any time in the province of Ontario.

Mr Conway: Given that statement from the minister of justice, my supplementary question is as follows: How then do she and her colleague the Premier explain and account for comments made in this province on a number of occasions in the last 24 hours by one of the most senior officials in the Ontario public service, namely, Ms Rosemary Brown, a prominent British Columbian brought to this province by Bob Rae to be chairperson of the Ontario Human Rights Commission?

Ms Brown has said, in the last 24 hours, and I quote from this morning's CBC Radio News, and I'm quoting Ms Brown directly: "When you're investigating a human rights complaint, you have to assume that the complaint that you're investigating is legitimate and you go out and investigate it. So the presumption of innocence should not apply at this investigative stage."

It couldn't be clearer. Ms Brown, this prominent British Columbian New Democrat brought and appointed by Bob Rae to this very, very sensitive and senior post, said she's proud of the work done by the commission in this connection. How does the minister of justice, and for that matter her colleague the Premier, explain and account for these comments from Ms Brown?

Hon Mrs Boyd: I think the confusion that has arisen is exactly around the presumptions that happen at the time of investigation. Indeed, the press asked me a similar question yesterday afternoon. The issue that was raised in the report is that very often when complaints are brought forward in issues that have not been

accepted generally as serious issues, there has been a tendency for those complaints not to be taken seriously or to be investigated seriously.

The point I think needs to be that of course every complaint that comes forward ought to be considered seriously and ought to be investigated by investigators with a view to determining all the broad range of facts that occur in the case. In my view—and I can't speak for Ms Brown and did not hear the interviews—that is different from an assumption that this means that at the end of the day someone will be found guilty of that offence. This is no different than it is in any police case and it's no different than it is any place else. When someone makes a complaint, it ought to be investigated very seriously and given real credibility.

Let me just complete my remarks, because I think people will understand a bit better. There was a day before your government, the previous Liberal government, took seriously the issue of making sure that wife assault and sexual assault complaints were considered seriously and were investigated seriously and that the credibility of the complainant was not presumed to be wrong, that in fact that did not pertain.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Mrs Boyd: Your government and our government have ensured that those complaints in those instances are given credibility and investigated clearly. That does not mean to say that when a complaint is raised in those issues we automatically assume that the person who may have been accused of that crime will be found guilty at the end of the day.

Mr Conway: I cannot contain my disbelief. The Bob Rae I have known for 12 to 15 years, and on these matters had respected, has truly gone missing. This is a fundamental right that everyone in this Legislature and in the province beyond must be concerned about. It has everything to do with first principles. I'm deeply disappointed that the Premier has not yet addressed this issue.

I want, in my final supplementary, to get back to the essential question. This is a fundamental principle that is not a half-issue, that is not an arm's-length issue. The charter and the political and legal culture speak to an unabridged right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

1400

Interjections.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): What's Rosemary saying? What about what Rosemary said?

The Speaker: Order, member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Conway: That is not what Bob Rae's appointment to the chair of the Human Rights Commission is saying. This is NDP ideology run amok.

The Speaker: Does the member have a question?

Mr Conway: Will you, Madam Minister, or the Premier, give this undertaking today: Will you summon Ms Brown to your office today and tell her that this is a clear and unfettered right, that this is not acceptable to Bob Rae or anyone else, and that if she's not prepared to accept that position and to articulate it, you or Bob Rae, the man who appointed her, will remove her immediately from this sensitive post?

Hon Mrs Boyd: Histrionics notwithstanding, I would say very clearly that it is not at all clear to me that in any way this fundamental principle, which is guaranteed under the charter and which we have clearly, clearly stated we will very much protect within our purview as a government and within those agencies that are run through this government—we're very, very clear about that, and it is not my position to call someone on the carpet for something that is reported to me and I have not heard.

I am not responsible for the Human Rights Commission; the Minister of Citizenship is. This is an issue, very clearly an issue—

Mr Stockwell: Pray to God it doesn't happen to you.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Etobicoke West is out of order.

Mr Conway: This is serious and this is the government of Ontario and we cannot let these remarks stand. Mr Speaker, I can't imagine—

The Speaker: Would the member for Renfrew North please take his seat.

Mr Conway: —a more serious issue and I cannot accept the assurance of the leader of the government—

The Speaker: I ask the member to take his seat. I must caution the member that if he refuses to take his seat, he will be named.

Mr Conway: This an affront to the fundamental rights of this province and this Legislature and the Premier must speak and he must speak now.

The Speaker: I ask the member to take his seat and to come to order.

Interjections.

Mr Conway: You find me somebody else who said that in this high office. Fred Cass said something like this and Robarts had him out on his ass in 24 hours.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): Histrionics.

The Speaker: I ask the member for Renfrew North again to come to order.

Mr Conway: Mr Speaker, on a point of privilege: I will not accept from my friend opposite that this is a matter of histrionics. This is a matter of the most fundamental kind.

The Speaker: No. The member is a cause of disorder. I ask the member to take his seat. I caution the

honourable member that, his experience notwithstanding, he is at this point in time a cause of disorder in the House and I ask him to please come to order.

Had the minister completed her response?

Hon Mrs Boyd: I can state very clearly to the member opposite and to all people in the province of Ontario that our position as a government is very clear. If it is not the same as Ms Brown's position, then that needs to be looked at and she needs to be clearly informed that it is not the position of this government. The presumption of innocence is a presumption that is fundamental to our system of justice in this province and in this country and it is not in question.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Is there a question from the third party? The leader.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I have a question to the Premier, following up on the question from the member for Renfrew North. Premier, regarding the Donna Young report yesterday, there was outrage at the repugnancy of the remarks that were in the Donna Young report. There was outrage all across this province. Indeed the outrage went across this country when details of that report were released.

Your Attorney General yesterday said that she did not condone this report—late, well after the fact, had to be prodded into it in the House. But that started to go some way, I suggest to you, Premier, to alleviate, if you like, the concern across this province that now the justice system, along with everything else, was going to hell in a handbasket in the province of Ontario.

Then, Premier, your newly appointed choice as chairperson of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, Rosemary Brown, came public and endorsed the report, gave it great credibility, worthy of further study, further sending out the signal of the repugnancy and the outrage of the fundamental tenet that you are innocent until proven guilty.

Premier, which of these two individuals do you support, your Attorney General or Rosemary Brown, your personal appointment to head up the Human Rights Commission?

Hon Mr Rae: I can only say to the honourable member that the position that was put forward in the House yesterday by the Attorney General as well as by the Minister of Citizenship is a position that I think is fully endorsed by all of us, I think by anybody who has an appreciation of the basic legal issues involved in terms of the Charter of Rights and everything else.

There is a fundamental presumption of innocence in our system. It's a presumption that applies throughout. That has nothing to do with whether one takes complaints seriously or not; of course one takes complaints seriously. But at all points, whatever allegations are made—I would say there are many allegations that are

made in this House which I don't necessarily leap to accept as being based on fact or necessarily the case.

I would only say to the member I accept the presumption of innocence and I would hope that the member would take the same point of view in all regards.

Mr Harris: Premier, there's a lot of confusion out there now whether your personal appointment to the Human Rights Commission is the one who is supported or whether it's your Attorney General. You've allowed both statements to go, and do you want to have it both ways? You support them both.

I tell you this: This report should never have been commissioned. It certainly should have been disowned and disavowed and burned and put into disrepute once it became public, which you have not done and which certainly Rosemary Brown has not done.

I tried to ask myself, how could this happen? Then I was referred to page 219, recommendation 46 of the Mary Cornish report, prepared exclusively for the Minister of Citizenship, and that recommendation says this, "The tribunal should be able to accept any evidence which it believes is reliable and relevant whether it is allowed as evidence in a court or not."

"Whether it is allowed as evidence in a court or not": Here's a recommendation prepared by Mary Cornish specifically for the minister that has been allowed to be out there, not disavowed, not discredited, not saying, "No way are we going to violate the principles in our justice system." Perhaps that's the reason why Rosemary Brown thought it was okay to proceed along these lines. Perhaps that's the reason.

The Speaker: Would the leader place his question, please.

Mr Harris: I would ask you today, Premier, have you spoken to your personal appointment, Rosemary Brown—I can't keep track of all these NDP imports that are brought into the province—your personal appointment brought into the province to head up the Human Rights Commission, and have you talked to your minister about the Cornish report, recommendation 46 on page 219, which in essence says the same thing: "Forget the court system, the justice system. Do what you want." Have you spoken to those two on these two matters?

Hon Mr Rae: The member was a member of the former Davis government and the Miller government. I would say to him with respect to the comments he's making with regard to Mary Cornish's recommendation—and perhaps he'd like to talk to his colleague from Parry Sound—the Ontario Securities Commission, just about every administrative tribunal around, is permitted to hear evidence and to consider evidence that it feels is reliable. Perhaps he can talk to his colleague from Willowdale or others.

1410

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): We are not talking about paper rights, Bob. We are talking about people's rights.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Brampton South.

Hon Mr Rae: To extrapolate from that recommendation something which speaks to the issue of the presumption of innocence is utterly, completely wrong. It's completely misleading. It shows he doesn't understand the basic elements of the recommendation. It shows he doesn't understand the basic elements of administrative law. I regret to say these things to the member, but they're so misinformed and uninformed and ill-informed that there's absolutely no connection between the two.

The government's position with regard to the presumption of innocence is absolutely clear as it relates to an investigation, as it relates to any consideration and as it relates to a hearing. It has absolutely nothing to do with the previous question or comments that you made. I literally can't understand how somebody could come into the House and make an allegation with regard to something that's in the Cornish report and somehow connect it with something else. The two things are totally different, they don't relate to one another and they reflect a level of understanding which I find literally unbelievable.

Mr Harris: I was trying to understand how a fundamental principle of justice could be articulated by your personal appointment and that she's still in the job, let alone called in or talked to. She's still on the job. I can't understand it.

I'll tell you what I do understand, Premier. I understand the repugnance of what happened yesterday. I understand the outrage all across this province, the phone calls coming into my office, into my colleagues' offices all across this province. I understand people and I understand why they are outraged when they see one of the very tenets, one of the pillars of democracy, of society, of freedom, of justice, being flaunted by you, by your two ministers and by your personal appointment.

Premier, is she still the chairman of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and if so, why?

Hon Mr Rae: I just want to put in perspective what the honourable member has just done. A report was prepared by a summer student which I hadn't even heard of until—

Mr Harris: Which Rosemary Brown supports.

Hon Mr Rae: No, wait a minute. I know you're in competition for the histrionic award today with the member for Renfrew. I know that's going on today.

I want to try to get an understanding. You talk about an allegation. This is the leader who's concerned about

a presumption of innocence. Here you have a government and a Premier of which you made a very direct allegation. You've accused me of flaunting injustice and destroying the justice system. That's the allegation you've now made.

Let me just say, what exactly has happened? A summer student at the Ontario Human Rights Commission has prepared a report which I never saw, which in the course of events wouldn't be the first thing to come across a Premier's desk. One of the things that she does is look at the question of the presumption of innocence and so on. Then he says this is now a government document, which it isn't. He says it's an NDP report, which it isn't. He says it's government policy, which it isn't, which has been absolutely refuted and not condoned by this government.

I would say to the honourable member, our policy in this regard, my policy in this regard, is crystal clear. If the honourable member had the decency, which I know he has, he would stand in his place and say: "I now understand that it is not the policy of the government of Ontario. I know full well it is not the policy of the Premier of Ontario. End of the issue." That's really where the member ought to be and that's where I hope he will be, because that's the decent step to take.

The Speaker: New question.

Mr Harris: There is a saying that silence is consent. Today, with respect to Rosemary Brown, I have heard silence, which is consent, from the Premier of the province of Ontario.

The Speaker: Does the leader have a second question?

Mr Harris: I find it repugnant. I find it revolting.

The Speaker: Would the leader take his seat, please.

Mr Stockwell: Do you want the text of the interview?

The Speaker: The member for Etobicoke West, please come to order. The leader of the third party with a second question to the Minister of Labour.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): This morning, Minister of Labour, we received a copy of the Provincial Auditor's special report into the Workers' Compensation Board building. I was surprised the Liberals raised it, because in January when we went after this in the committee, the Liberals had nothing to say on the matter. Quite frankly, we understand why, given the fact that this first came up in 1988 with the Liberals and was first explored in the spring of 1990.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Harris: However, Minister, the report is shocking, and according to the auditor, the decision, started under the Liberals and continued under your govern-

ment, to build a new WCB building—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Would the leader take his seat, please.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The leader of the third party was not at that meeting. He is totally wrong. I don't know where he's got that information from, but there was certainly no—

The Speaker: The member does not have a point of order. It's possible that there is a difference of opinion. The leader of the third party.

Mr Harris: The fact of the matter is that there was no Liberal minister at the switch, just as there was no NDP minister at the switch, while this decision was made. The auditor has pointed that out. It's in the auditor's report. Basically, it was nothing short of an ego trip. To quote the auditor: "The cost and the benefits of the various relocation options were not fully assessed. The assessments were highly influenced by the WCB's desire to own its headquarters."

Minister, can you explain to this House today why you failed, as the former Liberal minister failed, to put a stop to this costly exercise in empire building?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): I want to say that we raised a number of questions at the time. We raised the question of whether or not there was adequate space in Toronto, and an assessment was done of that. The legal opinions that the board had, three of them, responsible, indicated that they had the authority to make the investment.

I want to clearly indicate that the project does represent value for money, as exemplified in a net effective rent for Simcoe Place of \$25 per square foot, further depressing over a 20-year lease and an anticipated return on investment of about 15%.

Mr Harris: The auditor, quite frankly, Mr Minister, does not agree with you. When it comes to matters of getting a bang for the taxpayers' buck, I know you don't think that payroll taxes on employers are really taxpayers' dollars; I heard you say that today, which astounded me as well. But we kind of go with the auditor before we go with you in who has credibility on getting value for a buck.

Minister, the Liberals dug a hole and you fell into it. According to the auditor, all minutes of WCB meetings cross your desk, which means they crossed the former Liberal minister's desk. You have no excuse, just as the previous Liberal Minister of Labour had no excuse, for allowing this ridiculous use of tax dollars. The auditor concludes that the board violated the spirit of the WCB act by proceeding with the building in the first place.

Do you not agree, Minister, that this incident reinforces the need not only for an investigation into your relationship with the WCB but also a complete overhaul

of the management and the management structure of the WCB?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I want to repeat once again, because I think it's important to be said, that the report confirms that there is value for money, and we're not dealing with taxpayers' dollars here in investing in this building. That is what was the mandate of the Provincial Auditor. The report concludes that there will be a reasonable rate of return on the investment, and I can assure the honourable members that we will be monitoring the situation closely.

Interjections

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Harris: I'm astounded when I hear ministers of the crown saying that payroll taxes on the businesses and the corporations of this province should not be considered taxpayers' money. I just don't understand where you think all this money comes from. Who do you think is going to be responsible for the \$11 billion of unfunded liability, growing at a rate of \$100 million a month? Whose legislation is responsible for that? Who's going to have to pick up the tab?

Your Premier is asking every taxpayer to tighten their belt, and yet the goings-on within this government are ludicrous in how you're frittering and wasting the taxpayers' dollars that you're taking out of their pockets. We now have, in the last two days, three clear examples of so-called arm's-length agencies of this government amok, out of control, absolutely devastating the finances and affairs of this province and the justice system; yesterday, the OHRC and Ontario Hydro. Just last week, by the way, it was the Ontario Housing Corp blatantly violating, with the minister's permission, the Premier's guidelines on social contract, and today it's WCB.

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Minister, will you launch a full investigation into the management and the practices and what's going on over at WCB, and will you launch it today?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I want the member to know that the situation at the WCB and any problems that may arise there are on my desk on a monthly basis. We are monitoring it regularly. We are currently also in the process of looking at the operation and how the board operations may be improved.

I would like to also end up by saying that I don't know where the leader of the third party gets a \$100-million-a-year increase, because he's just way out of line in that figure as well.

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): My question is to the Premier. My question is to the leader of the government. Your appointee to the chairmanship of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, Ms Rosemary Brown, has said clearly and repeatedly in the last 24

hours that in so far as an investigation of human rights complaints is concerned, the presumption of innocence should not apply at certain stages. She has said it clearly and she has said it repeatedly.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): That's incorrect.

Mr Conway: I have the tape of CBC Radio this morning. I heard it clearly; I read it clearly.

I ask the Premier: Given what he has said, what I know he believes, has the leader of the government, the man who appointed Ms Brown to this enormously sensitive job, spoken with Ms Brown in recent days about these comments and how unacceptable and inappropriate they are to him and his government?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I guess the first point I would make is that I would hope that presumption of innocence would apply to Rosemary Brown as much as it applies to anyone else. I would say to the honourable member that he's made an allegation about something being said repeatedly, constantly. He then asks me whether I've spoken to Rosemary Brown over the past several days and then refers to an interview on the CBC this morning.

I would say to the honourable member very directly that the policy of this government and my views as Premier are very clear: that the presumption of innocence applies. At the same time, when one gets a complaint, one has to investigate it, recognizing that there are no assumptions of guilt or innocence when an allegation is made.

I would hope the honourable member would apply that very same standard which he's now calling for with regard to all the allegations he makes in the House when he persists and repeats and carries on in the way he does. If he applied his highfalutin' and very clear standards to himself, I wonder whether he'd be making some of the allegations and statements in this House that he's making. I don't think he'd pass his own test.

Mr Conway: I heard the woman say it. I have the tape. It couldn't be clearer. And I think all honourable members on all sides heard what I heard.

Let me say additionally that I believe I know where Bob Rae, civil libertarian and leader of the government, stands, and I respect that. That's my problem, because I think I know what Bob Rae believes, and I have before me comments made by a senior appointment by him to a very sensitive senior position in the government, comments by Ms Brown that I believe are fundamentally at odds with what Bob Rae believes and what he wants his government to believe. It's clear from the first answer that the Premier has not spoken to Ms Brown about her words in this connection.

My supplementary is simply this. Will the Premier today give this House and the concerned public of Ontario this undertaking: that he will this day call Ms Brown to his office, explain on his behalf very clearly

the policy of his government, extract from Ms Brown a commitment that she will accept that view that a right to be presumed innocent is fundamental and unabridged in all respects and that she will articulate that in her public responsibilities in this province, and that if she fails to give the Premier a full assurance in that connection—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member conclude his question, please.

Mr Conway: —that you will remove her forthwith from this position, given her stated views in this regard?

Hon Mr Rae: Let me just read from an interview that Rosemary Brown participated in, because, to be fair—and I know the honourable member, with his reputation for fairness, would want to be fair. Listen to the interview. Since the member has asked a prolonged question, I'd say this.

Interviewer Lorne Matalon says that the allegations of racism, speaking about the report, from slurs to outright discrimination, should be treated as legitimate. But, by extension, people and companies accused of racism are guilty until they prove otherwise.

“Rosemary Brown: You have to start over the assumption that the complaint which is being laid before you is a legitimate one.”

“Interviewer: And do you not agree that that inherently means by definition, by extension, that the accused is guilty going into the proceeding?”

“Rosemary Brown: No.” That's what she says right here: No. I've got the transcript. “No. What you are saying is that the person who has made the complaint is an honest person who perceives himself to have been injured.”

She then goes on, in another interview, to say, “What the commission wants to establish right from the beginning when people come through the door to file a complaint on race is that their complaint is going to be dealt with seriously.” Lorne Matalon, CBC News, Toronto.

I would say to the honourable member that I am quite confident that the chairman of the Human Rights Commission and others have a very clear understanding of the basic rule of the presumption of innocence. I would hope the honourable member would look at the entire record with respect to what has been said and apply that entire record and deal with it in fairness, rather than decide that you're going to hang, draw and quarter somebody within 10 seconds in question period and use that as your standard of justice with respect to the treatment of individuals who work for the public service of Ontario.

The Speaker: New question.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Would the member for Renfrew North

please take his seat.

Interjection.

The Speaker: The member does not have a point of privilege. New question.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I wonder if the Premier, since he loves quoting from transcripts, would listen to this quote, CBL Toronto, 8:30 am this morning.

“Brown: When you're investigating, you have to assume that the complaint you're investigating is legitimate and you go out and you investigate it, so the presumption of innocence should not apply at the investigative stage.”

In Brown's words, “The presumption of innocence should not apply.” That is her voice. That is a direct quote of Rosemary Brown. Do you agree with that direct quote or not?

Hon Mr Rae: With due respect, I have to see what the member is quoting from and what he's dealing with, which I think is fair in the context of a fair discussion.

I would say to him very directly, before he gets his instructions from the member from Renfrew as to how to ask a question, that I believe the presumption of innocence applies throughout the system. It applies at every stage. I believe that the presumption of innocence does not mean that you don't take a complaint seriously. You take complaints seriously, but you assume innocence throughout the process. I believe that very strongly.

Mr Harris: Premier, do you begin to understand now, after having heard the quote, the outrage that is speeding very quickly all across this province? Do you begin to understand why your silence on this matter is contributing to the outrage out there, to the repugnance out there; the fact that you thought it was okay to waltz in today—you weren't even going to come to question period today—and not have Ms Brown in, not get to the bottom of this, not find out if she stands by this statement? If she does, sack her, because I hear you saying today that you disagree with this.

You cannot allow this to carry on any longer. Every minute that goes by with your silence and protection and support and reading selectively from Ms Brown's other quotes allows this quote to go out as if it is government policy. Do you support Ms Brown in this quote or not? If not, will you have her in? Will you have a retraction? If not, will you have her dismissed?

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Hon Mr Rae: Again, I would ask the honourable members just to listen to what is being suggested. I would say to the honourable member that I have dealt directly with this question as it has been related to me. I would say to him, as directly as I can, that I think the issue, from the government's perspective, has been made crystal clear by the Minister of Citizenship. It's

been made crystal clear by the Attorney General, and I would say to the honourable member, the position of our government is extremely clear.

I don't think there can be any doubt about the position, and I don't think there can be any disagreement about the position. That position is one I'm very proud to state clearly and categorically, and that is, as I say, listening to the comments that are being made by various people, it would seem to me that the presumption of innocence ought to apply in every instance.

TAX REBATE

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): My question is to the Minister of Finance. I know this question concerns the members for Essex-Kent, Elgin and Norfolk. In your budget of 1993 you announced the elimination of the tax rebate for clear fuel with certain exemptions, not to mention among the exemptions the use of clear fuel by tobacco farmers. The flue-cure process for tobacco requires the use of clear fuel. The reasons for this is the colouring of diesel fuel is a known carcinogen—otherwise known as cancer-related, and I wouldn't want to use that comment dealing with tobacco—which leaves a residue on the tobacco.

Mr Minister, will you extend the tax exemption to tobacco farmers so they can use the clear and safer fuel in the curing process?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Several of my colleagues approached me concerning this problem after the budget was brought down on May 19. The problem was that before the budget some people would buy clear gas and apply for a refund, and there was a sense by officials and by me, quite frankly, that there was some abuse of that system. So we said that after the budget people would have to buy the coloured fuel if they wished to buy tax-exempt diesel fuel for off-road purposes.

The problem, as pointed out by the member for Chatham-Kent, was that for tobacco growers who cure their tobacco, that caused a particular problem. About a week ago I changed that aspect of the 1993 budget and from now on people who wish to buy the clear diesel fuel can do so for off-road purposes if they obtain a certificate which indicates that for legitimate purposes they are using the clear fuel for off-road purposes. Of course, people who cure tobacco would be considered a legitimate user for that purpose.

So, yes, and I appreciate very much the assistance I've had from my colleagues in this regard.

Mr Hope: I know the members for Essex-Kent, Elgin, Norfolk and myself from Chatham-Kent are appreciative of the considerations you gave to the tobacco farmers, because you're absolutely right: They are trying to make a living. Yes, we have the other tax issue.

I want to share a message from my daughter who is

sitting in the gallery, and she says you are a tall person.

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): New question to the Premier. I have an interview tape in front of me involving Ms Brown from this morning, an interview that I heard not once but twice. I heard the CBC news at 6:30 am and I heard it again at 8:30. I'm going to go out here and I'm going to get the tape, because I accept that I might have gotten it wrong. I don't think I did and my memory is confirmed by this transcript. The transcript, I should tell you, quotes Ms Brown and I remember this as well. She says, "I'm proud that the Human Rights Commission had the courage to commission this report." It goes on in ways that I remember distinctly as her having said this morning.

The Premier says that we have heard it incorrectly. I don't happen to think he's right. Let me get back to my main question, that there is a fundamental issue here and I'm going to ask the Premier, given the gravity and the sensitivity of this question, will he undertake to this House now a commitment to call Ms Brown to his office today so that he will have an opportunity to make it clear to her what his views are and what the policy of the government is so she will have an opportunity to explain whatever it is she said on whatever different occasions, and will the Premier further exact a commitment from Ms Brown to go forward and articulate and make policy on the basis of the policy of presumption of innocence in all respects?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I must just say this directly to the honourable member: As a consequence of the article in the Toronto Sun by Christie Blatchford yesterday, a number of questions were raised in the House. I've listened very carefully to the comments that have been made by the Minister of Citizenship, by the Attorney General, and a variety of comments that have been made by Rosemary Brown. I've just been handed another transcript of an interview that she gave at lunch.

The issue has to do not with a tribunal hearing in which somebody's put in the dock and there's an accusation made and there's a presumption of guilt or innocence; and there should always, in all those circumstances, be a presumption of innocence. The issue that I think eventually will be dealt with by the Human Rights Commission and by others is: When somebody comes in with an allegation, a complaint about a racist incident or a racial discrimination, how does the commission respond to that complaint?

What I understand Ms Brown to be saying, what I understand others to be saying, what I understood from the Attorney General and the answer that she gives, is that there has to be an assumption that when somebody comes in with a complaint, the complainant has to know that complaint will be taken seriously and that it will be investigated. That seems to me to be right. That's what

the Attorney General has said and that's what this government has said and that's what should be said.

So I would say directly to the honourable member, wanting to be as clear as I possibly can be, complaints must be taken seriously, but that does not affect in any way, shape or form the issue of the presumption of innocence or guilt.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: The presumption of innocence is a fundamental legal principle which applies to people who are accused of an offence and are put on the stand and are accused, and the presumption of innocence applies. The presumption of innocence is a fundamental legal principle in that sense. It has the full support of this government.

Mr Conway: I believe I know what the Premier believes. I believe I know what the minister of justice believes. My problem is that Rosemary Brown, as chair of the Human Rights Commission, appears to believe something quite different.

My question remains: If for no other reason than to clear the air and to set the record straight, will the Premier give me, the House and the people of Ontario an undertaking to call Ms Brown to his office immediately and to explain to her what he expects as a general rule across the government in the province of Ontario, that principle being the absolute presumption of innocence—

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): At every stage.

Mr Conway: —at every stage and in every process? And will he furthermore, having invited Ms Brown to his office, seek from her a commitment that she is going to accept his view and move forward on the basis of that view, and if she doesn't, will he commit to removing her for such views as so clearly stated today?

Hon Mr Rae: I would say to the honourable member that I am quite confident that the views I have expressed would be the views that would be shared by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and by the chairman of the commission—

Interjection.

Hon Mr Rae: —and I think that what the member is doing—and before he goes hysterical, I just would say to him—I think has got to be put in some perspective.

Someone goes to the police station. Let's set aside the issue of the Human Rights Commission. Let's deal with a complaint before the police. Someone goes to a police station and says, "I've been robbed, and I know the identity of the person who's robbed me." The police have an obligation to take that complaint seriously and they have an obligation to go and interview the person who's being accused and say, "Is this true?" all the way through presuming innocence. That basic procedure of

taking complaints seriously and understanding that complaints have to be taken seriously is one that needs to apply throughout.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Parry Sound.

Hon Mr Rae: I think that one wants to be very careful before making accusations or allegations with respect to the motives or otherwise of other people who are speaking on this issue with respect to this issue.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Wellington.

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): Read it. Can you read? When you're reading, "A presumption of innocence should not apply at the investigative stage," what does that mean, Floyd?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): Read the whole quote.

Mr Eves: I did. This is the whole quote.

The Speaker: The member for Wellington, not Parry Sound.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Parry Sound, please come to order.

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SMALL BUSINESS

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): In the absence of the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, I'm pitching my question to the Treasurer, and it concerns advisory services to small business.

Our local office of economic development and trade has been providing advisory services to small businesses for a large portion of Wellington county, as well as Grey county and Bruce county, for about the past five years, services such as advice to people thinking of starting a small business and helping existing small businesses find answers to their problems.

Recently, the staff at the Owen Sound office have been told to concentrate their efforts and resources on larger businesses, from 10 to 200 employees. Most of the small businesses in Wellington and rural Ontario generally are smaller than that, having 10 employees or less, and by shifting the ministry's resources to the larger companies, the ministry may be hurting existing small businesses and stalling and preventing growth of small business in Wellington county, as well as Grey county and Bruce county. I know the member for Grey has expressed an interest in this, as well as many municipal councils in north Wellington.

My question is this: Does the Treasurer believe it is appropriate to punish small business by eliminating this service, when the small business sector is the largest creator of jobs in Ontario?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I'm sorry I missed the very beginning part of the member's

question and I'm not sure to which program he was actually referring, but perhaps in his supplementary he could clear that up.

But in general, of course, I do not think that the small business community should be punished in any way at all. That's why, in the budget of a year ago, we actually reduced the tax rate on small businesses in this province to make them even more competitive than they are, because you don't have to convince me of the importance of small business. I know who creates a lot of the new jobs in this province and a lot of it is done by the small business community and I can tell you that this government stands four square, shoulder to shoulder with the small business community in Ontario as we make a very serious effort to rebuild the economy in this province.

Mr Arnott: You may think you're supporting small business, but your government's actions are working to the contrary. You're shutting down advisory services to small business in north Wellington, in Bruce county and in Grey county. What you're saying is, there are not going to be any more advisory services to the small businesses. I'm concerned about it because most of the businesses in Wellington county are these smaller ones, and I think it's important that you look at it in that perspective.

Much of the assistance is given to help companies deal with excessive regulatory demands that your government is putting on them. Recent Canadian Federation of Independent Business polls suggested that the second most important problem facing small business is the excessive regulation of your provincial government.

Will the Treasurer commit to reviewing this matter, so that advice and counselling for businesses with 10 or fewer employees will be reintroduced?

Hon Mr Laughren: I know that the member for Wellington, being as fairminded as he is—and I acknowledge the fact that he is speaking on behalf of the small business community in his constituency and I appreciate that. But I'm sure that he wouldn't want to leave the impression that the regulatory problems faced by small business have all been created by this government. I don't think he was saying that. I think he was saying that it all started back when the Tories were in power for 42 years and exacerbated by the Liberals in office for five years, and I acknowledge the fact that it has been a problem. We are doing what we can to remove some of those more serious irritants introduced by previous governments.

I would say in conclusion, though, to the member for Wellington, that—"in conclusion" are the words that gets the Speaker's attention. In conclusion, I know the member for Wellington, being a true conservative person, both big-c and little-c, would not want us to increase the bureaucracy any more than is absolutely

necessary in this province. As a matter of fact, when he asks us to reintroduce a program and increase the bureaucracy, I don't think that's in keeping with what his leader has been saying for the last couple of years.

Interjection.

The Speaker: The member for Grey, please come to order.

WAGE PROTECTION

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I have a question for the Minister of Labour. As you are well aware, the retail industry has been very hard hit by this recession.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr O'Connor: I'm trying to talk. I have a question here for the Minister of Labour. Thank you.

As you are well aware, the retail industry of this province has really been hit hard by this recession and many retail employees have lost their jobs. Just today, I read of another bankruptcy. The employees there have no money to pay their unsecured creditors and they potentially will lose thousands of dollars in severance and vacation moneys.

The bankruptcy trustee has told the over 300 employees of the Liptons women's wear chain that they will not see any money that is owed to them. There are many people who work in these stores in my riding who are going to be affected by this closure. Will they be eligible, through the employee wage protection program, for any money?

Because I know time is short, I'll put a supplementary in here as well. Minister, can you also give me, succinctly, a bit of a synopsis on the program? Is it working—people are asking these questions all the time—and will these people receive the money that is owed to them?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): I want to tell the honourable member, and I share his concern for these employees, whether or not we will be able to find any assets we can get out of the company through any action beyond the wage protection plan I can't tell him. But I can tell him that the employees themselves are eligible for up to \$5,000 each for the severance, vacation pay and wages. We have already assigned an investigative officer to look into the case.

In terms of the results, I think it should be of interest to everybody in the House—at least I would hope it is—that we have so far paid out to workers money that is their money in effect, or that they should have had: over \$102 million in the wage protection plan to more than 44,500 employees to date.

PETITIONS

CASINO GAMBLING

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition

addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which is signed by many fine, upstanding citizens of North Toronto:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I agree with their concerns about casino gambling and have affixed my signature.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

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"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislat-

ive Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I greatly appreciate having this opportunity to read this petition in. It's taken me four days to get the opportunity to do so. This petition is similar to the one that was just read by the member for Grey and it's opposing casino gambling. It has about 60 signatures on it from people from all over the riding of Oxford.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly, which reads as follows:

"Whereas the introduction of Bill 29 makes substantial changes to the Ontario drug benefit program that would allow the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make unilateral and significant changes to the Ontario Drug Benefit Act through regulation and without consultation with seniors nor negotiation with pharmacists,

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly to adopt the amendments to Bill 29, as proposed by the Ontario Pharmacists' Association, which is affixed to this petition."

Once again, this is the second time I've presented a petition of this nature. I affix my signature to it.

ABORTION

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): I am presenting this petition on behalf of the member for Frontenac-Addington. Due to his position as minister without portfolio and chief government whip, he is forbidden to present it. This petition is from residents of Ontario, including Willowdale, Mississauga, Markham, Brockville, the greater Toronto area among others. It was collected by the Campaign Life Coalition Ontario, by Ms Mary Ellen Douglas, and it is signed by literally thousands of people.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the report of the tax group of abortion services providers is an attempt to impose abortion on our doctors, nurses, school boards and counselling agencies; and

"Whereas the freedom of conscience of these individuals must be respected; and

"Whereas our tax dollars should be used to provide real health care to help distressed pregnant women and not to kill unborn babies;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That not a single recommendation of this outrageous report is implemented."

ACCESSORY APARTMENTS

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): I have

a petition signed by some 300 residents of my community, which reads as follows. It's addressed to the Legislature of Ontario:

"Whereas the Minister of Housing and the Minister of Municipal Affairs have released draft legislation for apartments in houses, granny flats, to permit accessory dwelling units as of right in all residential areas and to permit granny flats;

"We, the undersigned, object to the draft legislation for apartments in houses, granny flats, for the following reasons and petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

"(1) That the province examine the implications that the proposed legislation may have on the rights of property owners, landlords and tenants with respect to their expectations of zoning authority in the neighbourhoods in which they live;

"(2) That the province not entertain this proposed legislation removing the right of local government to regulate development without adequate public notification and opportunity to review and comment on the draft legislation;

"(3) That the local municipality be granted the authority to regulate and license or register accessory apartments;

"(4) That the province, in consultation with local and regional authorities, examine methods of compensating the municipality for increased costs of servicing new residential growth," ie, accessory apartments;

"(5) That right of entry for bylaw enforcement officers to inspect accessory apartments during reasonable hours be incorporated into the legislation;

"(6) That representatives from the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs be requested to conduct a public meeting in Brampton to discuss the draft legislation with the community"; and finally

"(7) That the city of Brampton supports granny flats as a form of housing intensification subject to the assurance that the units will be removed at the end of their intended use."

I have affixed my signature and agree with this petition.

NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario with signatures from Elmvale, Dundalk, Flesherton, Dryden, Collingwood, Barrie, Tillsonburg and quite a few other places around Ontario.

"Whereas in 1923, seven Ontario bands signed the Williams Treaty, which guaranteed that native peoples would fish and hunt according to provincial and federal conservation laws like everyone else; and

"Whereas the bands were paid the 1993 equivalent of \$20 million; and

"Whereas that treaty was upheld by Ontario's highest court last year; and

"Whereas Bob Rae is not enforcing existing laws which prohibit native peoples from hunting and fishing out of season; and

"Whereas this will put at risk an already pressured part of Ontario's natural environment;

"We, the undersigned, adamantly demand that the government honour the principles of fish and wildlife conservation, to respect our native and non-native ancestors and to respect the Williams Treaty."

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I think he should direct that petition as well to the federal government since the former Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development requested us to negotiate.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I know the member for Algoma likes to be helpful.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mrs Karen Haslam (Perth): Not to me. I have a petition to present.

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition to wide-open Sunday business.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on retailers, retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and delivery of psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will enable government to unilaterally and arbitrarily restrict payments for psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality mental health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw the proposal to restrict payments for psychotherapy and withdraw the proposal to allow the cabinet

to make decisions with respect to the number of times patients may receive particular insured services and set maximums with respect thereto.

"The government of Ontario must reaffirm its commitment to the process of joint management and rational reform of the delivery of medical services in the province as specified under the OMA-government framework agreement."

I concur with this petition. In fact I enthusiastically endorse it and affix my signature to it.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have another petition to the Legislative Assembly with approximately 1,000 signatures. They keep coming in every day on this matter.

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I have affixed my signature.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): I have a petition signed here from many residents in the ridings of Wentworth North and Hamilton Centre, some from St Mark's United Church, the Christian Reformed Church and my own parish of St James Anglican Church in Dundas, all expressing their concern and their opposition to Bill 38, Sunday shopping. I have also affixed my name in support.

HEALTH CARE

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition signed by many patients as well as physicians who live in Toronto.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I have attached my signature to this petition to which I agree.

1500

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have one more petition to the members of provincial Parliament regarding the amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act proposing wide-open Sunday shopping and the elimination of Sunday as a legal holiday.

"We, the undersigned, hereby register our opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

HOMOLKA CASE

Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold): I have a petition for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario headlined:

"Justice for Kristen and Leslie:

"We, the public, petition the Honourable Marion Boyd, Attorney General of Ontario, to immediately lift the ban imposed by Mr Justice Francis Kovacs in the trial against Karla Homolka to ensure that justice has indeed been served.

"We, the undersigned, feel that the sentence was far too lenient. We must know now the evidence brought forward in the trial in order to ensure that the sentence fits the crime."

It's signed by 1,852 people from Niagara region.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. This petition is signed by 650 members of my riding of Sarnia and surrounding area stating their opposition to Bill 38.

The petition calls on the government to defeat the proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act to "delete all Sundays except Easter...from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as

working days." They believe that this amendment "will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and will cause increased hardship on retailers, retail employees and their families."

In order to comply with our standing orders, I've affixed my signature to the petition.

RESTRICTIONS ON NEW DOCTORS

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition respecting the government proposal to shut out new doctors in Ontario that comes from Onaping, Levesque and many other areas of northern Ontario. It reads as follows:

"The Ontario government proposal to shut out new family doctors, paediatricians and psychiatrists from practising in most areas of Ontario is unacceptable. It will prevent these doctors from serving those patients who need care the most.

"Here are some examples: Women and children who need more access to female psychiatrists, paediatricians and family physicians; young female doctors form a much larger percentage of graduating doctors than the existing doctor population; cancer patients who will be denied care by doctors trained in palliative care and paediatric cancer; parents who have difficulty in finding obstetricians to deliver their babies and who therefore rely on young family physicians; psychiatric patients, including children, who already wait for an assessment depending on where they live.

"It's also a waste of the millions of dollars of taxpayer money already spent in training these doctors, doctors the people of Ontario will never get a chance to use.

"I oppose the Ontario government's proposal to shut out new doctors from practising."

As I've indicated, there are hundreds of signatures on this petition, and I affix my name to it.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT (TIRE TAX REPEAL), 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA TAXE DE VENTE AU DÉTAIL (ABOLITION DE LA TAXE SUR LES PNEUS)

On motion by Mrs Caplan, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 75, An Act to eliminate the Tire Tax / Loi visant à abolir la taxe sur les pneus.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Would the member like to make some comments?

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Orlino): Yes. I'll be very brief, as is the custom on first reading. The government tabled Bill 30. By the way, the title of Bill 30 is An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act. Included in Bill 30 are a number of adjustments to the Retail Sales Tax Act which I object to and which my constituents have told me they object to and find particularly difficult to deal

with at this time of the difficult economy in Ontario.

It's my belief, and I've said so during numerous debates in this House, that this previous budget of this government should not have increased taxes. They should have held the line on tax increases. So I find Bill 30 very difficult for me to support because it contains so much which is unpalatable.

There is one part of Bill 30 which I would like to support, and that is the repeal of the tire tax. It's contained here in section 4. What I've done is to remove that in its entirety so that it is a separate bill, which I hope the government will accept so that I can be on the record and support the withdrawal of the tire tax and still oppose Bill 30, which will impose an even heavier tax burden on my constituents who are saying, "Enough; no more taxes."

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I have on Orders and Notices several questions to which I have received notification, through interim responses, that the final answers would not be available until yesterday. Indeed, I have received none of the full answers and I'm asking that the Minister of Health take notice of that and provide those answers to me.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House in committee of the whole.

REPRESENTATION AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA REPRÉSENTATION ÉLECTORALE

Consideration of Bill 9, An Act to amend the Representation Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la représentation électorale.

The First Deputy Chair (Mr Dennis Drainville): Any comments or questions on section 1? Any comments or questions on any section of the bill?

Shall sections 1 through 3 stand as part of the bill? Agreed.

Shall the title carry? Carried.

Shall I report the bill to the House? Agreed.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I move that the committee rise and report.

The First Deputy Chair: Shall the motion carry? Carried.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): The committee of the whole House begs to report one bill without amendment and asks for leave to sit again.

Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

REPRESENTATION AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA REPRÉSENTATION ÉLECTORALE

Mr Murdoch moved third reading of Bill 9, An Act to amend the Representation Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la représentation électorale.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Are

there any comments from the member?

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): The first thing I would like to do is to thank all the House leaders, Mr Charlton, Mr Elston and Mr Eves, for looking after this bill and bringing it back for me. I certainly appreciate that.

I think what is happening now is that it's a reflection of the name of my riding. As you know, the name of the riding before was just Grey, and when we have third reading of this bill, the new name will become Grey-Owen Sound. As I said, it reflects my riding. I have a very rural riding in the county of Grey, but I also have the city of Owen Sound, which is separated from Grey in my riding. I think with the new name change it will reflect that and it will allow people to understand that we have a rural life in my riding but we also have a city right in the middle, practically, of the riding. We have things in the city that people enjoy and will be able to come to.

Interjections.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): Lousy hockey team.

Mr Murdoch: I have some other people trying to tell me we should have other changes, but I think this will be adequate.

I certainly appreciate, as I say, all the work that's been done and I think it will reflect what my riding is all about. I do appreciate that the House has brought this back. I would also like to thank David Cooke, who was House leader before, who didn't kill this bill on me and allowed it to stay around and bring it back in.

Before I sit down, I'd like to take the privilege of thanking Karen Haslam. She helped me out in my riding quite a bit when we needed a grant for our little theatre which is in Owen Sound. It shows that we have a theatre in a city that's in my riding now.

1510

Mrs Karen Haslam (Perth): I just wanted to thank the honourable member for mentioning that. I think it's always nice that money goes into smaller communities and communities outside of large urban centres and communities outside of Toronto. I do appreciate the member mentioning that.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): I'd like to comment on the member's bill and congratulate him. I know that most people who watch this House often wonder where we spend our time and our efforts. I recall that it was the former member for Oriole who felt very strongly that the name of Oriole riding should be Oriole and argued before the Commission on Election Finances and actually brought it to the floor of this Legislature. That was to commemorate the fact that Oriole was a small town and a small community which should not be forgotten in Ontario.

I think the member, in bringing forward this bill, is

saying a very important thing about his own riding. We're here as individual representatives. We all know the importance of the names of our ridings as they reflect the constituency. I think it's most appropriate that the name of his riding include the city of Owen Sound because people who look at the names of the ridings across this province often wonder if they have any real meaning and significance.

As someone who comes from a riding, the riding of Oriole, for which the name is very significant, I would acknowledge the former member, Mr Williams from Oriole, who recognized that and changed the name so that it would properly reflect the history.

I'd like to support and say to the government House leaders and others who've allowed this bill to come forward that I think it's a historic day for Grey and Owen Sound. I know that while it may not seem a big thing to those people watching, it is an important gesture by a member who's doing his best to represent that area.

Mr Harris: I too just want to say a few brief comments. We've heard from members from all sides of the House here in congratulations for the member for Grey, who negotiated this bill through two very, very tricky and tough government House leaders to get the legislative time. I know there are ministers of the crown who wish they could get the legislative time in the Legislature.

The member for Grey, in his very first term—now of course the member for Grey-Owen Sound—has been able to negotiate this bill not just through his caucus and his own House leader, who's a shrewd negotiator as well, but through the House leader for the Liberal Party, who has great experience, and two House leaders for the New Democratic Party.

It certainly speaks very well for the people of Grey-Owen Sound who have this kind of member who appreciates and understands the complexities of both rural and urban life in the representation that he's provided for his riding, the kind of representation that I know any citizen in Ontario would be so proud and pleased to have.

I want the people and the residents and the constituents of Grey-Owen Sound to know that not only is the member an excellent member in representing constituency concerns and advancing the cause of the riding, but he's very, very good at understanding the Legislature and the legislative process and then translating those concerns into legislative action. I too want to offer my congratulations.

Let me say to the member for Oriole that every time she's risen in her place in this session it's been very complementary to me and my party and my caucus. I appreciate that again today.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): I just wanted

15 seconds to register my support as well to the member for Grey in being able to negotiate this name change for his riding. What's surprising is to see that such an outspoken and fervent member of this Legislature has the support of his party's leader in the way that he has. It's truly remarkable. It speaks well of the member in terms of the work he does for his riding and the way he represents the people of his riding here in the Legislature. I commend him for that, and I believe that most of my colleagues on this side of the House would commend him for that.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Grey has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Murdoch: I just want to thank everyone who has spoken on behalf of this bill. It's nice that this bill has come in now. In the last few weeks, this House has been a little boisterous, you might say, and some people get a little upset in here. I think it's because it's so hot outside and the heat gets in here.

We're trying to get out of this House. Hopefully, with everyone getting along and understanding a bill like this, that it represents a riding, maybe at the end of the day they may adjourn the House for the summer. I could only hope that they would do that and then everybody could leave on a high note.

I want to remind them that this happened when we had Tartan Day a year or two ago, just before Christmas. We were in about the same boat, and we were spending some little time extra. My private member's resolution on Tartan Day was passed, we adjourned the House and harmony came back a little bit.

Hopefully, with this bill being passed today for third reading, we can get some harmony back in the House and some sanity. We could maybe adjourn the House for the summer and people would come back in the fall ready to look at some of the other legislation that is being presented by the government. Maybe we could look at it and pass some of that.

I just want to thank everyone again and thank you, Mr Speaker, for bringing the bill forward.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Murdoch has moved third reading of Bill 9.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Resolved that the bill now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ EN MATIÈRE D'EMPLOI

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 79, An Act to provide for Employment Equity for Aboriginal People, People with Disabilities, Members of Racial Minorities and Women / Loi prévoyant l'équité en matière d'emploi pour les autochtones, les personnes handicapées, les membres

des minorités raciales et les femmes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): When we ended this debate yesterday before 6 o'clock, Mr Carr, the member for Oakville South, had the floor. As he is not here now, we will move in rotation. I recognize the honourable member for Middlesex.

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): I'll be very brief. I simply wanted to respond to some of the things we heard from across the floor yesterday. I think I would be derelict if I didn't say very clearly that a great deal of what I heard from across the floor yesterday was offensive. All these statements about quotas in this House simply served to exploit misinformed fears and to invite backlash. It's insulting for those in our community who every day face barriers to their employment to say, as members across the floor did, that this legislation will force employers to hire unqualified or less qualified people or to hire people on the basis of their gender, race or disability.

Employers will be expected to provide all qualified individuals with a fair and equal chance at securing a job or earning a promotion. In fact, measures such as outreach recruitment or work site accommodation for people with disabilities will widen the pool of qualified job applicants. It will bring talented people previously overlooked into our workplaces.

If we reject this legislation, we're buying into a myth, the myth that this will force employers to hire unqualified workers or fill quotas. We are accepting another damaging myth, that we have equal opportunity now. We will accept this long-standing belief despite all of the evidence reached over and over in our communities that outdated business practices and barriers in the workplace are in fact denying a large and growing number of Ontarians equal opportunity for hiring and promotion. If we believe this myth that we have equity or equality, then why on earth would we be seeing statistics that tell us that 30% of disabled people report that they are denied work because of their disability?

1520

I won't go on long, but in listening to what was said yesterday, I was reminded of an incident that I witnessed first hand when I was a student working my way through university. I worked at a local park, a local tourist attraction, and one day in midsummer, the gatekeeper was very, very upset because a group of disabled adults had come through the park with people who were aiding them. They were coming to enjoy what they had previously been unable to enjoy, and that was a wonderful park on a summer afternoon. The gatekeeper was upset because his response was that somehow they were upsetting to the people who were there on vacation. His precise words were, "People on holidays shouldn't have to look at that."

Being young and impressionable, I was appalled at what I heard. I've never forgotten it, because it occurred

to me at that point in time that the reason people weren't used to seeing the disabled in our communities in places where we would vacation is because we had created barriers to their being in those places. In the same way, I discovered on listening to my colleague Mr Malkowski that barriers are also created that prevent people who have hearing loss or hearing problems from applying for jobs or picking up the telephone and that people who have sight problems may not be able to know that a job is available. In creating these barriers, we've denied ourselves a very important resource, and we've denied ourselves the privilege of knowing all of the people in our communities as coworkers.

I would say that this legislation is a very important first step on that long journey to bringing all of those who would contribute and who would participate into our workplaces and into our lives. I am very grateful to the Minister of Citizenship for all of the work she's done in making this possible.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for her participation in the debate. Questions and/or comments?

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): As a young, white male, the critics tell me that I should be afraid of this piece of legislation. I want to say that I'm not afraid of this piece of legislation. I think it's a good piece of legislation.

I think the comments that the member for Middlesex has put forward in terms of responding to comments from yesterday are very appropriate. The types of negative stereotypes about employment equity legislation that members of the third party have brought forward in their speeches have absolutely infuriated and disgusted me, and I'm glad the member for Middlesex was responding to those comments in her remarks.

Employment equity is not about not hiring people on merit. What it means is that you're going to broaden your applicant pool, so it probably means that you're going to get better applicants, you're going to get even more qualified people coming forward to apply for the jobs and be considered for the jobs. That's not going to hurt business; that's going to help business. There's no doubt about it. That will help business. It is allowing everybody in our community, in our province, to contribute, to have the opportunity to contribute, to be taxpaying citizens and to work in good jobs at all levels.

I just cannot believe that in 1993 we are still hearing from some members of this House who are digging up and repeating every negative stereotype that ever existed about any piece of employment equity legislation in this House. It just really, really infuriates me. It's one thing to be opposed to a piece of legislation and how it's put forward, but some of the comments I've heard in this House in the last few days I just cannot believe that members in 1993 would be saying.

I want to congratulate the member for Middlesex for her comments, and the Minister of Citizenship for bringing this legislation forward. They have done extensive consultation with the public in general and with the business community. They've talked about what this bill is all about, about the principles behind it, about the fact that small businesses with less than 50 employees are exempt from the bill. I just want to congratulate the member for Middlesex and say that I support this piece of legislation.

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): I would like to respond to the member for Middlesex regarding her thoughts and comments. Her points are very valid, the concerns she raised by people with disabilities, by women, by visible minorities.

The important point I want to make concerning this piece of legislation is that it gives hope and satisfaction to parents with children who are disabled. It gives the parents hope for the future. It gives career opportunities to the children of the future. It comforts the parents of disabled children because it gives career opportunities. That's what this piece of legislation will give.

It's important that all members of the House understand this. We need the cooperation of all members of the House to work together so that this legislation will proceed.

Who will benefit from it? The disabled children who will grow up—it will be their futures—will benefit from it. They will have hope. They will have wonderful opportunities and they will become those people of the future.

I can't believe there are members who would be working against this legislation trying to destroy this hope. It's important that you understand, this is of benefit to all. We are proud of this. It would provide economic investment, and it will provide this through employment equity.

We are investing in people across Ontario, and I congratulate the member for Middlesex for the points she raised. They are very valid points.

I'd also like to congratulate the Minister of Citizenship for her hard work in bringing the people and the business community together to work successfully.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I'd like to comment on the statements the member for Middlesex put on the record.

My concern about this piece of legislation specifically surrounds the quotas that are being laid out by the government. Let's be clear, first off. They're not saying "quotas." They've not used that word because they think that word will affect their legislation both in the public and broader private sector; and it would, because the quota system hasn't worked anywhere. It hasn't worked absolutely anywhere. You can go state by state by state in the United States and they can show you, chapter and

verse, exactly how regressive, backward, the quota system has been.

They didn't use the word "quotas"; they've used the word "guidelines." What a company has to do is to provide guidelines to the government and if the government likes those guidelines or, in essence, the quotas, it will approve them. If they don't like them, they'll say: "I'm sorry. We're going to impose guidelines on you."

I don't know how the other side can argue that this is not a quota system. You could be up front. If that's what you want to do, if that's your plan, then I think you should be up front, categoric about it and say, "We're instituting quotas," and then we can have a good, broad, wide-ranging debate on the effectiveness of quotas. But again, the member for Middlesex and the others who've spoken refuse to use that word, and I find that somewhat distasteful.

Much like a lot of other things they do, they change words. It's not "user fees," it's "sharing in paying." They change words but they all mean the same thing.

If you're going to defend the quota, then be my guest, defend it, but don't go on the pretence that you don't have a quota system because you changed the term "quota" to "guideline." That is both unfair and a little bit underhanded for the people of this province.

The Acting Speaker: Are there further questions or comments? If not, I recognize the honourable member for Middlesex. You have two minutes to make a response.

Mrs Mathysen: Very quickly, I thank the members for their comments, and I certainly thank the members on this side of the House for their kind words.

I would like to say the member for Oxford said it best, I think, in his statement that offering opportunities to all does not diminish opportunity in any way.

1530

In response to the member for Etobicoke West, again we come back to the tired old argument, the tired old use of the word "quotas." It simply doesn't apply and the people of Ontario are not going to buy that old argument that somehow tries to make this into something that it's not. Basically this bill says very clearly that we must bring down the kinds of physical barriers that have kept people outside the workplace, that have kept them away from those in society who are so fortunate that they don't have to cope on a daily basis with a disability.

If you think about it, it's only been in the very recent past that we've seen people with disabilities on public transit, seen them in recreational facilities. This bill is designed to bring them into our workplace in a very, very positive way, because that's how we build bridges of understanding: by having all of those in our society who wish to contribute as part of that society.

I find no pleasure in saying that there are those in

this House who bandy about words that are designed to inflame and to resurrect patently and blatantly unsophisticated attitudes that have no place in a thinking society. I thank you for this opportunity, Mr Speaker.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): I'm pleased to rise today and participate in what I think will be a very important debate in this Legislature and in this province. We're discussing Bill 79, the employment equity bill which has been brought forward by the government of Bob Rae.

If anyone had ever told me that I would have been standing in my place to say that I intended not to support a bill to bring employment equity into Ontario, I think I would have expressed surprise myself, because I know the work that was ongoing. I know the history of this legislation and I know what I expected to see brought forward and tabled in this House.

Yet Bill 79 is so different from anything that I think anyone would have expected, any thinking person who understood and believed and supported the principles of elimination of discrimination in the workplace, that it is with a great deal of sadness that I speak to this legislation today, because I don't believe this legislation will achieve the goals and I believe that this legislation will fan the flames of unnecessary backlash, because it has managed to do something that perhaps only Bob Rae and the NDP once again could prove that they alone could do, and that is to bring in an enforcement model that nobody likes and nobody supports, except those on the very fringes of an issue.

In the time that is allotted to me, I will address the issues in the bill and also make some constructive suggestions to the NDP of what it could do instead.

First of all, Ontario is in the midst of what I hoped today I could have discussed as an economic recovery, but the signs are not good. People are still losing their jobs, businesses are going bankrupt and the people of Ontario who are lining up to collect welfare are sending a very important message to this province today, and that is: "We want to work, we want jobs. Jobs are our number one priority." This piece of legislation that is tabled before us today is not going to create one new job. In fact, my concern is, because it is so highly bureaucratic, because it is so intrusionary and because it will create a backlash, Bill 79 could in fact mean fewer jobs in the province of Ontario in the near future.

I want to quote two comments. One is from the Toronto Star editorial, which like myself has always been supported and supportive of employment equity initiatives. And this is what the Toronto Star in its editorial of June 27 has to say about Bill 79:

"After spending two years and a few million dollars, the government has come up with a plan that's not likely to help those it's supposed to. Yet it'll put employers through extensive bureaucratic hoops in this

recession. In so doing, the NDP has managed the worst of both worlds."

The second quote, I think, speaks volumes. This quote, "To have an employment equity law that does not do anything is worse than having no law at all," is from Avvy Go, Women's Coalition for Employment Equity, and a former member of the regulations advisory group, and she said this on June 25, 1993.

What I would like to say is that employment equity is not new in this province. It dates back to a 1983 report by, at that time, Judge Rosalie Abella. We're all familiar with that report. In response to that, the Progressive Conservative government in the province of Ontario in 1984 brought in an employment equity incentive fund which was established by the government to assist municipalities in implementing employment equity programs.

The reason I'm mentioning it is that I was a member of North York council at the time. I remember when we hired an employment equity coordinator with the assistance of the province and we began an extensive education program within the city, as did other municipalities across this province.

We know that in 1986 the federal government brought forward the Employment Equity Act, and at that time there was much discussion about how effective that legislation would be and what the next steps would likely be.

From 1985 until 1990 we saw many initiatives under the former Liberal government of which I'm proud to have been a part. In 1985 we saw the Equality Rights Statutes Law Act. We also saw, and I'm proud to say that as Chairman of Management Board, I had the responsibility for developing the I Count questionnaire, which was the Ontario public service's response to employment equity.

The government of Ontario had always advertised itself as an equal opportunity employer, and as Chairman of Management Board at that time, it was my task as the technical employer of the government to ensure that the government of Ontario was moving forward with the kind of program which would ensure that in fact it was an equal opportunity employer.

Do you know what? I was particularly proud of that initiative under the leadership of the staff at Management Board. We brought in the kind of expertise that developed a questionnaire that became a model for employers across this country.

You know, Mr Speaker, there was no backlash when that questionnaire, back in 1985, was completed, when the government of Ontario for its own employees did its survey to see what the population was, who was working there, where they were, and what kind of incentives—and I use the word very clearly—were necessary to eliminate the barriers that those who've been ident-

ified as disadvantaged required to assist them.

We know that over the course of time from 1985 to 1990 there were many initiatives. The Ministry of Citizenship was created. In 1987 we saw pay equity legislation. Although it was damned by the then NDP government as not being good enough, going far enough or being significant enough, we know that it turned out to be a piece of legislation that this government has been unable to implement.

I find that sad and I also find it distressing because yet today we have another piece of legislation that we're debating today which I don't believe this government will be able to implement.

1540

In 1987, it was a Liberal government that established a working group on employment equity, which ultimately became named the Employment Equity Commission. We saw the establishment of an employment equity branch at the Human Resources Secretariat, which was the next step, and that was a result, after the development of the I Count questionnaire and the important work within the Ontario public service, within the Ontario civil service, to begin an internal employment equity program that could become a model for employers across the province.

In 1988, the Liberal government amended the Human Rights Code to ensure that special needs of persons with disabilities are reasonably accommodated by employers. We knew that one of the barriers to employment was often the physical requirements to accommodate a person with special needs and disabilities, and that was done in 1988.

We saw a broad discussion paper from June until September of 1989, probably one of the most significant reports tabled in this House. In 1989, the report Access to Trades and Professions in Ontario was tabled in the Legislature. That was in October 1989. It's with great sadness that I stand here in this House today and tell the people who are watching this debate and remind the members of the NDP government caucus and my colleagues on the opposition side of the House that—

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don't believe there's a quorum present.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: I recognize the honourable member for Oriole.

Mrs Caplan: As I was saying, it's with sadness that I stand here today to say that the October 1989 report of the Task Force on Professions and Trades is gathering

dust on the shelves, that nothing has happened, that there were many significant and important initiatives that this government could have undertaken, that I expected it would have undertaken, but it gathers dust.

In December 1989, the Ontario public service employment equity fund was established to fund employment equity initiatives in the public sector—that's the broader public sector—and it was supported with a commitment of \$23 million over three years. That was just one more step, one more incremental step on the road to achieving employment equity and equal opportunity for people in the province of Ontario. It also was an important step in furthering understanding and educating people about what employment equity really means and why no one should fear those basic principles and why there are barriers that are in place and how we can address them.

In July 1990, the Police Services Act legislated mandatory employment equity for Ontario police forces, and before that, there were changes which required employment equity programs in the broader education sector of the province.

That's a record that I'm particularly proud to have been a part of and that's why, given the support for those kinds of initiatives, understanding the need for education and training, knowing how we can go step-by-step and knowing the legislation that was in the process of being drafted, I stand here today really distressed that I cannot support Bill 79 because it's bad legislation.

I don't think there's any fairminded person who would argue that discrimination is not a problem in our society. We know that often qualified people are shut out of hiring and promotion simply because of race or gender or disability. We know those barriers exist. We also know that most people are willing to accept the need for special measures to assist particular groups of people from time to time. That's an understanding, that's a tolerance, that's a value within our society that we have fostered and we have seen grow since back in 1983 when this was identified as a problem.

The debate is not whether or not there should be employment equity legislation in Ontario. The debate today is about whether this legislation is most workable in devising an effective way which will benefit and not disadvantage, because employment equity and employment equity legislation should not be reverse discrimination and disadvantage anyone.

Employment equity should help to level the playing field, if you will, remove the barriers, remove discrimination and educate. It's my view that there are many incentives, carrots if you will, that can be used to accomplish this without the intrusionary, highly bureaucratic stick that the NDP has chosen.

I am proud to say that the Ontario Liberal Party

supports employment equity, and we believe that legislation or regulatory requirements can be a catalyst for change. That was one of the reasons that, when we were in government, we brought in the initiatives that I spoke about a moment ago, mandatory employment equity for police services.

We supported the employment equity incentive fund for school boards and implemented employment equity programs successfully and without a backlash through the entire Ontario public service. That is a record of accomplishment and that is also a model that could have been emulated by this government if it wanted to see how you could do something in a positive and progressive way, in a way that people could support.

This legislation which is being proposed by the New Democrats, by the NDP, is cumbersome, it is unnecessarily bureaucratic and, what is probably more significant than anyone watching could really comprehend, it is very vague and it has many ill-defined provisions.

From my experience here in this Legislature, it is very important that legislation be clear and be specific so that it can be properly interpreted, because unless you are clear in your legislation, people will fear it. One of the problems you have and one of the reasons that you have a backlash is because this legislation is vague, this legislation is ill-defined and this legislation is causing fear because the results are not clear about what this legislation will do.

My difficulty with this legislation begins with the stated purpose of the bill, and that's why I cannot support this in principle. You see, what this bill says is that every employer's workforce, in all occupational categories and at all levels of employment, must reflect, for each designated group, the general population.

I believe that employment equity must guarantee equal access to employment opportunities free from arbitrary obstruction, but I do not agree that the goal of employment equity is, as the NDP has told us, to guarantee in every place of business that it has a racial, ethnic and gender mix equal to what exists in the population.

1550

Let me be specific. Let me state again what I believe. I believe that employment equity is the right, it is the guarantee, to equal access to an employment opportunity free from arbitrary obstruction. To me, that does not mean it is a guarantee that every place of business must have a racial, ethnic and gender mix which is equal to the population in which that employer has his or her business.

The reason I don't support that is that that's quotas. Call it what you want, that approach is quotas, and that's why you're having a backlash, because people find that offensive. I find that offensive. I found it offensive when Bob Rae guaranteed quotas in the

Senate. He was going to guarantee, at the time of the constitutional debates, X number of seats for women in the Senate who came from Ontario. That's a quota.

We have many, many examples of the NDP and their support for quotas, and even though they talk about targets, we know that what this legislation purports to do is quotas, because they have not distinguished clearly the difference between a target, a goal and a quota. Do you know why, Mr Speaker? One of the concerns I have is that this government has contaminated the language, and I've said this about a number of things they have done.

They use the term "target," and yet clearly in the legislation when they talk about the requirements of business to have a racial, ethnic and gender mix equal to what exists in the general population, that is a quota. Therefore, the basic fundamental principle of this bill is at odds with what this government says it is attempting to do and achieve.

People find quotas offensive, I find quotas offensive, and that's not what people want. When you have a quota, what that says is that in order to meet your quota, you will likely hire people who are unqualified. That's the result of the affirmative action programs in the United States. That was the downfall of those programs, because rather than just increasing, as one of my colleagues opposite referred to it, the pool of candidates, that's not what this does. That's not what this legislation does. It does not increase the pool. It has a requirement which can be legitimately interpreted as a quota.

That is fundamentally wrong in our society, Mr Speaker, and I can tell you that minorities and women and disabled persons and native persons and francophones and those who have been traditionally discriminated against in our society do not want tokenism and they do not want quotas. They want the right to compete fairly, they want barriers to equal opportunity eliminated, but they do not want tokenism and they do not want quotas. This bill will provide for tokenism and this bill will provide for quotas, and this is just plain bad legislation.

We've seen this government and its comfort with quotas on a number of occasions. We know that the former Minister of Education, Mr Silipo, now the Minister of Community and Social Services, has spoken about reserving a proportion of first-year faculty positions in education for racial minorities. When you reserve positions, that's a quota.

Bill 79, in my view, puts too much emphasis on paper and not enough emphasis on people. It's about numbers and number crunching, it's about qualitative changes and it's about keeping records and book-keeping. It is not about educating people. It is not about expanding the employment pool. It is not about access to trades and professions. It's not about creating jobs or

a climate where jobs can flourish.

As I said, I believe this is overly bureaucratic. I'm not going to go into detail about the 14-tier workforce survey that it requires or the complete requirement for statistical analysis and the maintenance of those statistics, breaking it down into designated groups and compensational and occupational groups, separate records for unionized and non-unionized employees and records for men and women. I'm not going to get into that.

I will say, however, that it does place an onerous burden on employers to allocate too much of their time and their resources on administration. The need for extensive recordkeeping will take away, in my opinion, from the employers' ability to provide the kind of education, development, training and anti-discrimination programs that will open up access to hiring and promotion. If an employer is putting his or her resources into administration and bookkeeping, you can be sure that comes right off the bottom line and will not be available to be invested in new jobs, and that's one of the concerns that I have.

The role assigned to the unions, as one would expect from this government, makes this process even more complicated and very, very costly. I'm not going to get into the process and procedure in the bill. Suffice to say that it fails to clearly explain what is meant by the joint responsibility for implementing employment equity.

In my view, these programs must be management responsibilities. There must be a requirement to consult. However, this goes far beyond that kind of consultation. This legislation does not provide time lines or even guidelines for the resolution of disputes between employers and a bargaining agent. What happens is it has a reverse incentive. The incentive here for the union is to resist, because if it does not agree, if it has not negotiated a plan, then it's referred to the office of the Employment Equity Commissioner and a plan can be imposed and, again, there's no time line.

During all of this, nobody knows what's going on, nobody knows how long this is going to take or how much it's going to cost. So if you're in a dispute, what you can end up with is something which is unproductive, costly, bureaucratic and creating friction within the workplace instead of what I believe we should be attempting to achieve, and that is improved labour relations.

I do want to say that the role that has been assigned to the Employment Equity Commission and the tribunal will, in my view, not only lead to bureaucratic backlogs, as we have seen at the Human Rights Commission, but in my opinion they've given the Employment Equity Commission a job of policing.

From my experience, enforcement models simply do not work, and I would suggest to this government that

it look at what I would call an empowerment model which has incentives and carrots and the kind of support that will encourage and bring along employers and employees to understand that employment equity is good for business, it can be good for business, it can be implemented in a way which will foster a climate for investment and create jobs.

One of the saddest moments for me when I saw this legislation was the reaction from those people who, in the summer of 1990, I knew were ready for employment equity and were waiting for a piece of legislation that would allow this to move forward in a progressive and incremental way. The fact that we've had this negative response from everyone, to me, is a huge message of just how badly the NDP has bungled once again a very important issue, which could have been positive and progressive and good for business and employees in the province of Ontario.

The powers that this legislation gives to the Employment Equity Commission, I think, could create a nightmare, and I'm very concerned about the government handing over powers to yet another agency. Because what this legislation does is it offers no incentives to employers, just penalties. We've seen many examples of incentives that could have been incorporated in the legislation, successful initiatives like the agent for change program, the employment equity incentive fund, the employment equity awards, the community action fund. Carrots work better than sticks.

1600

I told my colleagues opposite that I would take a couple of minutes to suggest some positive alternatives to this government. I really believe we could see some very significant reforms to the Human Rights Commission which would have a great opportunity for dealing with systemic change through various human rights enforcement and education models. Enhancing the Human Rights Commission I believe is one real alternative that could work.

When we look at the overlapping functions between the pay equity office and the Human Rights Commission, I believe the government, rather than setting up yet another layer of bureaucracy, could look at consolidating all of that enforcement and commissions and models, avoid yet another layer of expensive bureaucracy through that consolidation and include employment equity as a part of that coordinated and consolidated equity response.

I think the government could take the whole issue of employment equity and employment opportunities to people who want access if it would take action on the recommendations in the Access to Trades and Professions document that I referred to earlier.

Another thing they might consider would be tax incentives or a contract compliance program, anything which will encourage jobs to be created and where

government contracts and support could go to those employers who could then be showcased as examples of how this is good for business. I believe there are many positive things that can be achieved.

I'd like to wind up my comments by saying to the members of the government that bad legislation is worse than no legislation at all. I ask them to reconsider. Bill 79 is not going to achieve your goals and it is not going to do anything except create hardship and an unnecessary backlash in the province of Ontario. I will not be supporting it.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for her participation in the debate. Questions and/or comments?

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): I want to believe that the member for Oriole is sincere when she speaks about employment equity and her desire to see equity among all the people we're trying to include through this legislation, but as I listen to her remarks, I'm not convinced that she's supportive of employment equity for all the people of Ontario.

She says we use contaminated language. I listen to her language and I wonder what there is that is clear. She says this legislation is not clear, that it's cumbersome, it's intrusive, it's bureaucratic. Then I listen to her and I say, "What has she said to me that is clear, that will make me understand that what she's proposing, or her party, is clear or effective?" She gives me the Liberal answer to that. The Liberal answer is, "We support equal access." I presume the Tory members support the same theory. "Equal access"—that's a fine Liberal thought.

Everyone of course has equal access to everything, everyone will argue. I use education as an example where people say, "What we want to encourage is equal access." Everyone knows students do not have equal access, because they do not come with the same conditions. In addition, the system has within it systemic barriers that fight against certain groups.

What this legislation attempts to do when we say that every employer in all categories must reflect the general population is to do exactly that, because it recognizes that at the moment the workforce, both in this government and in all agencies, does not reflect the workforce. So how do the Liberal Party member and the Liberal Party and the Tories and their members intend to deal with discrimination? Because they admit it exists. But when it comes to the answers, they don't have any. They simply argue, "They should have equal access." That is not the answer. This legislation moves in that direction. That is the answer.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): I want to commend the member for Oriole for the excellent presentation she made. She comes from the point of view of understanding employment equity. If there's

anyone in this House who has worked so ardently towards getting the equity situation resolved and putting programs and legislation in place, it's the member for Oriole. I want to commend her for her presentation.

It seems to me I could only recommend to the government side, who are saying they don't understand and that she's not clear enough, to take the Hansard and slowly, at your own pace, read it. Read it, because I think this time you'll see how she has expressed very clearly some of the concerns that are placed in this bill that is before us.

She spoke about, very much so, when the study of I Count was put in place, how people did not get the job and how we must approach that to have equity in the workplace.

Patronization is what she talks about and saying that we do not patronize those designated groups. They want fair access and to be treated fairly. They don't want to be given any special treatment. They want to be treated fairly in this situation.

She gave you another example. She gave you an example rather clearly of the restructuring of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, not a duplication of the process, spending millions of dollars to set up something to give bureaucrats a job or some other people you'd like to give a job to, to make sure that restructuring—to ask the minister—there are studies done on how to do that. We have not made sure yet how the minister has read those reports. No wonder we have that problem today about reports that are coming out for \$10,000 and what have you.

I want to commend her and advise you all to read it very carefully. There's much to be had from her contribution.

Mr Stockwell: I think this legislation and the fact that this government won't say the word "quota"—I find it so deceitful that it won't do that. It is a quota system. You won't say the word because you don't like the word, but it doesn't make it any less of a quota system.

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): That is in your thinking.

Mr Stockwell: No. I read this very clearly. It comes from your Ministry of Citizenship, right out of her office. It says: "Numerical goals: These are the proportion of opportunities for change, new positions created, transfers, promotions etc, the employer plans to fill with members of each designated group. For example, an employer might set a goal of one third of job opportunities in a particular occupation group to be filled with women."

That's a quota. That's what they're filing with your government and you will approve it or not approve it. Then, on a three-year basis, you'll measure the success rate. It's a quota system.

If that's what you believe in, then say it, but to hide behind phrases and terminology like "numerical goals" and "qualitative measures" and "employment equity plans"—it's a quota system. Just say it. If that's what the member for Fort York believes in, say it. It's a quota system that hasn't worked anywhere and all you're doing is hiding behind these phrases.

Mr Marchese: What works, Chris? Tell me what works.

Mr Stockwell: He's suggesting to me, what works? I know what doesn't work. This doesn't work. You know it doesn't work. It's proven not to work everywhere. So rather than saying, "The quota system doesn't work and we won't introduce it," you change the name. If that isn't the ultimate deceit, I don't know what is. Don't stand here and lecture us about this system and the quota system. If you're going to be honest, be honest and defend it. Don't tell me this isn't a quota system; your own minister says it's a quota system.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): I'm not prepared to sit here and take lectures from the opposition either. I think the opposition, both the Conservatives and the Liberals, should take a look at their own constituency offices and find out the types of people who are coming into their constituency offices complaining about the fact that there's no work out there. When they apply for any positions they're interested in, they don't get them, not because they're not qualified, but take a look at the colour of the skin that comes into your offices and take a look at the gender that comes into your offices. It's very consistent.

You obviously aren't paying attention to the people who are coming into your constituency offices. If you were, you will know that this piece of legislation is fair.

1610

You have no right, no right whatsoever, to stand up here and yell at us and lecture us, because as my colleague said earlier, we are doing something. We are not sitting on our hands like the Liberal government did for five years, and certainly the Conservatives have no right to lecture us whatsoever.

Mr Speaker, I can tell you this: In my constituency office, I know that this piece of legislation will address the concerns of many who come into our office.

Let's face it, in my community, and this is no secret, the majority of the people on welfare are visible minorities. Why? Why are they visible minorities? It's not because of the NDP government; it's because of the system that you as Conservatives and you as Liberals have endorsed for ages. We are at least doing something, and I'm proud of the fact that five, six or seven years down the road, it will be visible.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member. I believe the honourable member for Oriole has two minutes to make a response.

Mrs Marland: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I know that we no longer go in rotation for questions and answers, but I thought there was an allocation still of two members from each caucus, including the summary by the original speaker. We have had only one speaker in this round.

The Acting Speaker: No, I followed exactly the way we do it, and that is, you recognize those who are on their feet. We started over with the government side because there was no one up at that point in the House. I recognized the first person up. I looked over on this side of the House, and then we just moved around in rotation on that basis.

Mrs Marland: I'm sorry; I've been up on my feet twice, both times.

The Acting Speaker: I apologize then to the honourable member, because I did not see her when I looked towards those benches.

Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: There was a ruling given by the Speaker of the House about three weeks ago. I don't want to challenge your ruling, but I think you should read the ruling that—

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member can't challenge the ruling, I believe.

Mr Stockwell: No, and I'm saying to you, sir, that I think you should read the ruling handed down by Mr Warner, the Speaker of the House, because at that time he ruled that there was no such thing as a rotation, that it's an allotment, and the allotment would be to the party next proceeding in the speaking order, with two and one to one. So I'm not challenging your ruling; I'm just saying maybe it's good if you review that ruling, because it was very clear.

The Acting Speaker: I know of the ruling, I have seen the ruling and I would say to the honourable member that there cannot be two members from each caucus who get up and speak on this because there can only be four members who speak and one response.

I also have indicated to the honourable member that it is up to the Chair to recognize. I did look around the House. If I missed the honourable member for Mississauga South, it was an oversight on my part, and I do apologize for that.

The honourable member for Oriole.

Mrs Caplan: I'd like to respond to the comments of my colleagues. I'd like to say first to the member, I think, for Downsview, that people are on welfare because there are no jobs. They're on welfare because of bankruptcies. They're on welfare because of the policies of this government. Jobs are being lost, people are going out of business and they're not coming to Ontario to invest in new jobs. That's why people are on welfare.

I also want to tell him that people are afraid. They're afraid that they are going to lose their jobs.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): I'm tired of listening to that. If they wanted to do something which makes up the job losses, let them do it—

The Acting Speaker: Order. The honourable member for Downsview will come to order.

Mr Perruzza: —and if they haven't got anything, then don't say it.

The Acting Speaker: I said, the honourable member will come to order.

Mrs Caplan: Thank you, Mr Speaker. People are afraid they're going to lose their jobs. They're afraid their children will not have opportunities for jobs. They're feeling angry and they're feeling alienated. Bill 79, employment equity legislation by the NDP government, does nothing to alleviate their fears.

The member for Downsview said it's not what you say, it's what you do, and that is the hallmark of this government. This government says one thing and it does another. Whether you call it deceit or whether you call it contaminated language, they say one thing—

Mr Perruzza: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It's twice that she's referred to things that I've said. I haven't spoken in this debate.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member does not have a point of order.

Mr Perruzza: In fact, it was my colleague from Yorkview who spoke in this particular debate.

The Acting Speaker: Please be seated. You do not have a point of order.

Mr Perruzza: However, if she keeps referring to me—Mr Speaker, if you want to get my comments on the record, I'll do that.

The Acting Speaker: I have said to the honourable member, be seated.

Mrs Caplan: Do I have the time, Mr Speaker?

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The last interruption was not a point of order. I think we should put the two minutes back on the clock, because those interruptions are clearly not points of order. The member can have his chance in his two-minute rebuttal. All he's doing is obstructing what's going on here.

The Acting Speaker: We'll put 25 seconds back on the clock.

Mrs Caplan: As I was saying, the member—perhaps it was Yorkview; I thought it was Downsview—said that what's important is not what you say, it's what you do.

When I look at what this government has done in the politicization of the civil service, the appointment of David Agnew, the appointment of NDP right through the entire civil service, it runs contrary to everything that you stand for and say you stand for when it comes to employment equity and when it comes to equal

access to employment opportunities based on merit. It is true this government says one thing and does another. It is deceitful. This legislation is not worthy of support and it is not worthy of this government to bring it forward.

The last thing I'd like to say as advice to the government is that you cannot legislate behaviour. The most important thing you can do is to bring people along with you. Creating a backlash in the province at this time will do more damage than good. I ask them to withdraw this legislation.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I'd like to say a few words with respect to the Employment Equity Act, 1993. I certainly understand the principle of it, which is to try and encourage people of the visible minorities and women and the disabled and aboriginal people to obtain more rights with respect to employment. I understand the rationale behind that.

But what, for the life of me, I have a great deal of difficulty with, particularly in this time of recession around the world, when we're looking at competition with other countries, with other provinces, among ourselves, among our cities, among people in our own cities, is why, instead of saying what the best qualifications are, we are indeed saying that the qualifications for a job are not how you excel in that job or not what your educational qualifications are but, first of all, the qualifications for that job are whether you're a woman, whether you're a visible minority, whether you're an aboriginal or whether you're disabled. I find it rather remarkable that this is a position that this government is putting forward.

Employment equity: I certainly admire the person who thought up the words "employment equity," because everybody is in favour of employment equity. We all want these people—there's no question that examples from the past can be given of women, these other areas, where people may have been discriminated against. We already have laws in this country that preclude employers from discriminating against people because of all of those things. That law already has existed and it has existed for some time. We already have those laws.

Now we're going to say, "We're going to hire you." You must hire people, not based on their qualifications but based on those four categories which have nothing to do with the job. It's whether you're a woman that you get the job, or whether you're a visible minority.

What is a visible minority? I have yet to figure out what a visible minority is. I'll be looking forward to someone in this House, in this place—and if it goes to committee, I can assure you that I, if I have any role in any of those committees, will be questioning members from the ministry to come forward and tell us what a visible minority is. And who is disabled? Am I disabled because I wear glasses? What is disabled? What does

that mean? I look forward to hearing more with respect to this piece of legislation.

1620

When we talk about the whole subject of equality, I can't resist referring to a booklet I took when I was in school—I obtained a copy from the legislative library—which I'm sure many of you have read, any of you who are interested in politics; that is, George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. It's a small booklet, and it's very easy reading; it's only got about 115, 120 pages in it. I would recommend that if you haven't read it, read it. It's directed of course to the whole principle of totalitarianism, replacing one dictator with another dictator. That's the principle of it.

It takes place on a farm, the oppression of the farm animals, and it takes place with the dream of an old boar named Major. Major sees a future in which man the farmer, as the oppressor, is thrown out. So they devise a revolution. They indeed inspire the other animals on the farm to drive the farmers and the humans out of the farm, and power gradually becomes concentrated in the hands of the pigs.

You would think that they were the ones who thought this up, and you would think that we would eventually obtain the equality, utopian equality, where everyone is created equal. Any of our religious teachings tell us that we're all created equal. No matter what your gender is, no matter what the colour of your skin is, what your religion is, whether you're an aboriginal or whether you're not an aboriginal, whether you're disabled, we're all created equal and we should all be treated equally in applying for jobs. That's the principle of this quota bill.

The book went on, and eventually the farmers and the humans were thrown off the farm and the pigs took over. Eventually, the pigs started to dress like the farmer. They put on the farmer's clothes, and they were even worse than the farmers. At the conclusion of the book, the pigs ended up as the new oppressors in a sexless society. They killed dissidents and they did all kinds of dastardly things which were far worse than what the farmers did.

There's an interesting principle as to what I'm getting to, because it does get back to that principle that we're all created equal. The result of it was the principle. There was a sign that was finally created on a wall, a single commandment that was created by the pigs who took over: "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." We've all heard that expression, and that's to show the futility of totalitarian states.

I'm not suggesting that this government is a totalitarian state, but I am talking with respect to the issue of equality. We're having a government come forward that is going to say, "You're going to hire these people and you're going to hire these people and you're going to hire these people." The qualifications have nothing to do with how they excel in that particular job. It has

nothing to do with what their education is, absolutely nothing. The issue is, it's depending on your gender, the colour of your skin, whether you're disabled or whether you're an aboriginal.

The difficulty of all of this, and we've heard a few catcalls across the floor, is that when you start to debate this issue, it's very easy to accuse people of being sexist or being racist, very easy to do that, but the question all of you must remember is that you are now imposing a law, as the pigs imposed laws in *Animal Farm*, about who people are going to hire, that you're going to have to have a quota system.

The conclusion of *Animal Farm* was, and this is the very last paragraph:

"Twelve voices were shouting in anger and they were all alike. No question now what had happened to the faces of the pigs. The creatures outside looked from pig to man and from man to pig and from pig to man again, but already it was impossible to say which was which."

I hope some of you will understand the principles of equality that developed from this little booklet that was printed by George Orwell. I believe it was back in the 1940s that he wrote this book—I can't recall, but I believe it was back in the 1940s, some time ago—but the principles still stand on it today.

The other issue of course is that the regulations just recently came out with respect to this bill. I believe that the regulations on how the act applies to the aboriginal workplaces and the construction industry will be developed safely, but all the other matters are dealt with in the regulations.

The interesting thing is that employees can now say whether they're a visible minority; they can say whether they're disabled. They're the ones who can say that. That can go unchallenged; no one can challenge them. I suppose that if I fill out the questionnaire I could receive if I am an employee, I could say I'm disabled because I happen to wear glasses because my eyesight is poor and it may well be that I may not be able to perform my job as well as other people can who don't wear glasses; a rather preposterous statement, but it can be made with respect to this questionnaire. And there are all kinds of shades of skin, people today who I don't believe consider themselves visible minorities, but they're sure going to be visible minorities under this legislation.

The difficulty and the great fear I have in this legislation—I'm thinking particularly of the comments that were made by the member for Fort York that this bill is going to help these people. Well, I believe it's going to breed racism; I really do believe that. I hope I'm wrong. The member for Fort York has suggested that won't happen. I hope he's right. But the problem is that this whole concentration on what is a visible minority is going to be exaggerated to degrees we've never seen.

Mr Perruzza: Kim Campbell just referred new immigrants to the Solicitor General.

Mr Tilson: Listen, you can talk about who new immigrants are and who aren't new immigrants. The problem that we're going to have is that we don't know what a visible minority is.

I'd like to refer somewhat to the issue of the regulations. There's an interesting column in the weekly newspaper, the *Eye*, which I'm sure many of you read diligently each week. I don't know who writes these things, but it was an interesting observation about the regulations that came out and the disparity that's going to be created. I'd like to refer somewhat to this article and the observations that were made by this writer.

This 24-page list of regulations which was issued and which all of us have defines, for example, what the aboriginal people are, what persons with disabilities are. This group includes "persons with a persistent impairment, physical, mental, psychiatric, sensory or learning, whose opportunity for employment is likely to be affected by the impairment."

Well, that's a very broad definition, and I am sure, just on that subject alone, that we're going to have all kinds of people who don't think they're disabled today but who are going to say they're disabled, particularly white males.

It's the white male who's going to be discriminated against as a result of this legislation, because the quota system says you must have so many of these groups ahead of anyone else. The allegations of reverse discrimination are something that you on the government side must consider before you proceed with this legislation; reverse discrimination.

The article, which is a column in the *Eye*, is called "The Park," and many of you have read it. It just came out; I think it's the July 1 edition. It talks about these regulations:

"While Equity Minister Elaine Ziemba was calling her proposed law 'the most progressive legislative package of its kind in North America,' Avvy Go, president of the Chinese National Council and a member of the minister's own advisory committee, was so disappointed that she called Ziemba's consultation process a 'sham.'"

"Under the proposed law, all employers with more than 50 staff will have to file a report with the government outlining how they will ensure that their workforce matches the workers in their area by sex, race and disability."

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I'll be looking forward to see how everyone's going to do that and the bureaucracy it's going to require. Who is going to administer all of these things? Who is going to enforce all of these requirements? Who is going to determine whether someone falls in these

different categories? There are newspaper articles galore that I'm sure you've all read: Who is an aboriginal? Is there a certain percentage in your background that qualifies you as an aboriginal? I'll be looking forward to some talks on that.

Continuing on with the article, "...in the Metro Toronto area, for example, an employer would have to make sure that about half of all employees were women, 15% visible minorities and 3% disabled."

The article says: "A laudable goal. But the plan breaks down in the implementation. First of all, employees will be allowed to decide for themselves when they fill out a questionnaire whether they fit any of the above three categories; employers will simply have to accept what employees say."

Does that mean that if I fill out a form and say I'm a visible minority, who's going to question it? I don't think I'm a visible minority, just looking at me, but according to these regulations it appears that's what the case is going to be.

"Because being a member of one of the target groups might help an employee hold on to his or her job in these tough times, this law will breed more gender confusion on the job than there is in some downtown Toronto bars.

"Some minorities who aren't as visible as others will start describing themselves in more colourful ways than in the past. People will be scrambling on to the vis-min-equity train to save their jobs."

Then it gets into an interesting comment. Some of you may have heard of the rock group The Commitments, and this article refers to that.

"Many people will do the same as the mythical Irish rock group in the movie *The Commitments*, whose manager encouraged them to think of themselves as black 'because the Irish are the blacks of Europe and Dubliners are the blacks of Ireland.'

"If people of Italian or Greek or Arab or Israeli heritage see their job security threatened, why wouldn't they call themselves a 'visible minority,' although they have never done so before?"

That's a very good observation. These people have never considered themselves a visible minority, but if they want to hold on to their jobs, particularly if they are white males, and many of those people will consider themselves white males, the only way they can get a job or hold on to a job is to describe themselves as a visible minority. So the author of this article is quite correct.

It proceeds with respect to these people: "After all, they aren't as white as the Anglo-Saxons...Blacks and Asians who were supposed to be protected by this law will soon have a lot of visible minority coworkers they don't know they had."

Another interesting observation is, this bill is designed to protect these people, specifically the people

who have just been referred to, yet we're going to have a whole group more people who don't consider themselves visible minorities. In fact, they are now saying they're visible minorities, so it's a rather strange world that this government is creating.

I'm continuing on with the article: "Why would white men voluntarily fill out a form that might lead to losing their jobs if the place where they work doesn't have enough minorities or women or disabled?"

The article continues: "The good news for the white boys is that they can check off any box on the form: woman—yes, minority—yes, disabled—why not! Employees get to say what category they are in and their answers can't be questioned."

That's the most damning part of these regulations. It may well be that the government in its wisdom will amend the whole process that individuals can say they're one of these groups and no one's around to challenge them. There doesn't appear to be any way in which they can be challenged, and that's a legitimate criticism.

So if we go to committee—I hope this will. I can't believe this won't go to committee and that this topic won't be explored with the committee: someone says they're a visible minority, or someone says they're disabled or someone may say they're a woman—all kinds of strange things are in this society today. The fact of the matter is, it cannot be challenged, and I would hope that members of the government who are working on this legislation will pursue that issue.

The forms are confidential once they are filled out. The only exception occurs if you work for a company in a construction trade. In that case, these rules don't apply. As I said at the outset, as I understand it, there's going to be a separate set of regulations which will be developed for the aboriginal workplaces and the construction workplaces. However, the article goes on with a certain amount of tongue-in-cheek comments which I don't think would be appropriate to refer to. But the author, certainly in the first part of this article, raises some very worthwhile points.

I don't think for one minute this government is trying to create racism. I must confess, I got terribly concerned during the so-called race riots in Toronto that happened a year ago. As the result of that, Mr Lewis and Ms Akande were asked to report to this House. One of the comments troubled me, because it even goes one step beyond the issue of the quota system. That was the suggestion that even in our educational system, the qualifications to enter a university or post-secondary institution were these categories. How preposterous to suggest that the qualifications to entering into our places of higher learning should be the issue of gender.

On that issue alone, my goodness, there are stats out—I don't know where I've put them—that show in

many of the professions today there are more women who are graduating from the professions: I believe in the profession of law and I believe in the profession of medicine. I could be corrected on medicine, but I think in law there are more women. I know I'm digressing from the bill, because the bill doesn't talk about that, but that's another step. If this problem is here, what are we going to do with it? This government has chosen the quota system as the way to solve this problem.

If you're going to do that, then take a look at what's going to happen afterwards. Remember what we're continuing to do. We're continuing to compete in the workplace. We're continuing to compete around the world. I don't believe that people are going to invest in this province, I don't think that people are going to work in this province with this type of bill that in fact breeds racism. Those are my remarks.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Questions and/or comments?

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): This is always a very difficult issue to address because it is one that I think has a long history. I'm old enough in fact to remember, in the days of good old Toronto, where, in order to be a police officer, you had to be a certain height—the Minister of Finance would never have met that height qualification—and you had to be of a religious persuasion.

But I have to say that those things changed. They didn't change by a government bringing in legislation to enforce that type of change; they changed through a number of ways. They changed through immigration, with people coming in of different cultural backgrounds, different religious backgrounds. We in fact saw that this was no longer the situation, and I applaud that.

The problem I've got is it's kind of like—I hate to say this, because Pierre Elliott Trudeau is my wife's idol. But he tried to bring in French by requiring civil servants and adults to learn French, where they probably had a tin ear and weren't able to do it, rather than the approach that's now taken with our young children, where they learn it by immersion, by choice. I think that we should learn something from our history. We should learn something from the way things happen and not try to make government everything and the be-all and end-all to all people.

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As I say, it's very difficult to speak on an issue like this because I have constituents who have come from all areas of the world. I obviously have many women in my riding. I have children with learning disabilities. I would like to see them have an equal opportunity to be able to be employed.

The fear I've got is that this legislation, as was presented by some of the other members, could possibly, and God forbid it does because it will probably

pass with this majority, result in racism in reverse.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I would like to compliment my colleague the member for Dufferin-Peel for a thoughtful contribution to this debate. It's alarming when you listen to the previous speaker and the comments which went around this chamber and the absolute screams that we got from the government side which would suggest that in some way we were not in favour of embracing equity for all people. It's insulting. It suggests rather that the government has a corner on compassion and consideration.

When you look at the experiment that Toronto is, this great experiment—in the latest United Nations survey Toronto is the most cosmopolitan place in the world—and, as an immigrant, I remember when I came here Toronto wasn't the city it is today. It has become a very interesting place because of all the people from all of the different cultures of the world who have come here, and they're working together very well, generally. There are some exceptions.

But when we look back at history in North America, we know of the immigration, for example, of Jewish immigrants earlier this century, and they were certainly challenged in many ways and discriminated against. Thank God, we have got rid of those problems now. They are now leading members of society. It's significant that the Jewish community is not asking for this type of treatment—they are concerned with equity—and the Jewish community never did, my colleague the member for Willowdale is pointing out.

There is no party which has a corner on compassion. We support equity, but this bill, unfortunately, we believe, will lead to racism. I thank my colleague for his contribution to the debate.

Mr Perruzza: Very briefly, just in response to some of the comments that were made, this isn't about cornering the market on compassion. This isn't about anyone taking a position where they're holier than thou. This is about taking a realistic approach, a realistic position on dealing with some of the systemic barriers that are out there for some people in our society who have problems gaining access to equity, gaining access to workplaces.

Maybe some of my Conservative friends and I know certainly some of my Liberal friends—the Liberal from Oriole spoke earlier about this and she referred back to the Judge Abella report and to some of the other things that they were doing. But in listening to some of the comments, there's a recognition that somehow there aren't physical barriers to disabled persons getting access to certain jobs. Wake up and smell the coffee. Yes, there are. There are physical barriers for disabled persons to gain access to jobs. If you don't take the step in order to level the playing field to some degree, they won't gain access to those jobs.

Women have problems gaining access to jobs. There's a lot of sexism out there. It's in your own offices. Just look around and if you don't move on some of these issues, those barriers will be perpetuated and continue to exist, and that's all this bill does.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. We can accommodate one final participant.

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I was interested in listening to the remarks of the member for Dufferin-Peel and to hear his literary references and other documentation that he presented to the House.

While my view and the view of my party accords with the final view of the Conservative Party with respect to this bill, that we will not be supporting it and we feel the emphasis should be placed on eliminating barriers to access, on providing the incentives, by example, to accommodate the workplaces and so on that will ensure that there is access no matter what race, creed, colour or physical or mental disability, while that is our position and the bottom line remains the same, I want to put before the House that the steps in the argumentation which were put by the member for Dufferin-Peel are not those which I concur with or support.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Dufferin-Peel has two minutes in response.

Mr Tilson: I appreciate particularly the member for Downsview, who commented that there is a serious problem in our society. I guess my objection to this particular bill is that you look beyond what the bill is going to do; you postulate as to the results of what that bill will create.

Are these people who are writing these articles and who are saying these things in our media and on our televisions and on the streets in your own riding right when they say that there will be reverse discrimination? Are they right? Are you creating yet another problem, perhaps an even worse problem that has no justification? I think everyone will agree there's a problem, but I believe in all sincerity that the proposal that is being put forward by this legislation is not the answer.

I believe this act will make racism and sexism the law in the province of Ontario. When you think about it, that's what it's going to do if you think of the results. That is the downside of your bill, of the quota bill; it's not an employment equity bill. We should stop talking about the fact that this is an employment equity bill. This is not an employment equity bill; this is a quota bill that says you must have a certain number of people in a particular job based on race, gender, visible minorities, disabled and aboriginals. That's what the law is and that is wrong.

Ms Zanana L. Akande (St Andrew-St Patrick): I rise to support Bill 79 because it's unfortunately necessary. It would have been my hope, and certainly it has

been my hope for a very long time, that we would not have to have employment equity legislation. It would have been my hope that employers and people would look out and see the people who exist in our society who contribute to it and would have said: "Here are people with education, with ability, with experience, so then let's employ them, and once we employ them, let's consider them for promotion. Let's have them move very much as everyone else moves through the ranks to administrative roles and to demonstrate the leadership skills which they have honed in our schools and in our institutions much as everyone else has."

It would have been my hope that this is the way it would be, and yet it has not been that way. It has not been that way in the private sector and it has not been that way even in the public sector. Many people, people who have disabilities, people who are racial minorities, certainly first nations and others have prepared themselves to take their place in this society shoulder to shoulder with everyone else and they have been rejected.

They have applied for positions to get in the door, to get in the mainstream, and they have been, in great numbers, refused. They have continued to work, some of them even training those people who have been brought in initially when they have been employed, only to see those people pass them in promotion, and yet they have continued to work.

1650

This legislation is absolutely necessary, because no matter how we talk and no matter how we educate, in schools or informally, no matter how we speak about the multicultural forces that are out there, and no matter how we discuss the strengths and the abilities of the people in the target groups in this legislation, people continue to mirror themselves in the people they hire and the people they promote, so we come to the point where this legislation is necessary, and normal.

I have always been in a field, and I have read about so many others and worked in others previous to my entering education, where when you wanted to get the very best people, you widened the search. You went out of the city; you went to several cities. You went out of the province; you went to many provinces. You widened the search and you thought, "The more we widen the search, the more people will come in, the more real talent we'll have to screen and the more likely we'll get the very best people."

Well, we are widening the search by this legislation. We are telling employers, because some of them need to be reminded, that the search must include all the people of Canada: first nations, people with disabilities, racial minorities, women; all of those people.

And yes, if we mourn something today, it's that the legislation is necessary, but necessary it is, and so here it is.

If in fact there are those among you who would reject the legislation, please let's do it with some modicum of truth. Let us not say that we oppose the legislation because it encourages employers to employ unqualified workers. That is not true. To say that is to say a lie. To say that in fact is to imply that people with physical disabilities, people who are first nations, racial minorities and women are generally unqualified, that they have not skills or education or ability, and that is not true. Most important in all of this, we must get the very best people, the very best-qualified people, the very best people who have education and ability, and so we are widening the search.

If we refuse the legislation, let us not say it's because it imposes quotas. That is not true. If we have numerical goals—and Lord knows I work in a profession, or did before, that had many numerical goals as an educator—numerical goals are the standard by which we can evaluate how much we have succeeded. Every child writes a test and aims for 100. Not every child gets 100, and yet we use 100 as the base by which we compare how much that child has achieved, and that's why we write the score as 75 out of 100, 22 out of 100, 87 out of 100, and that is what a numerical goal is. Every child strives for 100.

If we reject the legislation, let's not do so because we think that there are Caucasian males who will lie. I would suggest that the ethics of that disturb me. Let us not believe that there are vast numbers of white males who en masse will become black women. I have to say that the visual picture of that is comical. But after I stop laughing, I have also to say it is unethical. I would seriously question the ability of anyone, any white male, who identified himself as a black woman. I would have to say that as an employer, I would question his veracity and whether in fact I had initially made the best choice.

If we reject the legislation, let us not do so because, like Orwell's book *Animal Farm*, the pigs—and I don't like the analogy—are going to take over. Mr Speaker, you and I both know that if the first nations had an immigration policy like ours, none of us would be here. We have to look at that too.

Let us not carry this to the extreme. Let us be truthful. We're in a recession. Jobs are tight and money is tighter. When the watering hole shrinks, the animals view each other differently. We're all looking at each other and we're saying, "Who's going to get that job?"

Some people who have been in a very privileged position for a very long time, in spite of the education projects, in spite of our talking, in spite of the multicultural posters, in spite of the human rights ideology, in spite of all of that, are saying, "Heck, I'm going to have to now have my competence, my ability tested against other people." I ask the member for Dufferin-Peel, is he not secure that those who have enjoyed privilege are able to compete? I am certain that

those in the target group can compete. I'm certain of it.

I'm certain that everyone in this House really does want employment equity some time. You see, we don't want the compassion the member for Dufferin-Peel spoke of. We don't want that sensitive feeling. We don't want pity. We want and we deserve and we demand equity.

Mr Curling: The honourable member from St Patrick has spoken eloquently with compassion about what employment equity is all about. I completely agree with you. All the things you said are the things I believe in about employment equity. The problem we have, though, is the fact that this legislation that's been brought in has diluted and has lost the focus of what it's all about.

I think that yes, we can all identify with the things you've said. I think your colleagues identify with that. It's how we translate that into proper legislation, so that it's not tokenism, it is not patronization, it is not quotas, so that it is where the people must have real access because of their ability and not because one feels that 50 out of 100 should be black or 25 out of that should be disabled. We talk about merit and we talk about the ability of people to be there. I believe in that sincerely.

Many of those individuals are asking that in itself, that they who have had the qualifications must be assessed in that manner. There is a government that can do that. They must act upon those reports that have reflected the fact that they are qualified. We keep on mentioning Access to Trades and Professions. They are saying they're qualified people.

With all that you said, my honourable member from St Patrick, you're certainly right. If this party, the Liberal Party, is able to make sure that those regulations are amended in order to strengthen that legislation to show that people will be treated fairly, I go along fully with exactly what you said, because people don't want to be patronized in any way but to be treated in the way you had said. I think your comments are quite relevant. Let's get legislation that enforces those types of things.

1700

Mrs Karen Haslam (Perth): I had to rise, because I think I'm like other people in this Legislature who have not had to deal with the type of discrimination that my colleague might have had to deal with. I don't think any of us truly recognize the depth from which she has spoken, but it certainly came out in her talk today. I, for one, am very pleased to see this type of legislation brought forward.

Perhaps it's not been a priority of mine because I haven't felt as deeply about it, I haven't been as affected by it, but let me tell you that having heard my colleague speak, having done the reading on it—and I mention something I read today, where we talk about: "We are not imposing quotas, but all employers covered

by the legislation must establish numerical goals to increase representation of minority groups in their workforces. In setting goals, employers must consider the current level of underrepresentation, availability of minorities in their workforces and the availability of minorities in their geographic area." Those are things that I think every employer should be looking at but perhaps isn't, and this legislation is now saying, "Yes, look at those things."

I also say that I welcome this legislation and I hope every employer deals with it in the cooperative manner we're asking them to do that in.

Mr Callahan: One of the flaws in this bill is that they don't tell us what "numerical goals" means. I think any piece of legislation that's going to govern the lives of people should tell us what "numerical goals" means. It has a whole list of operative statements. The member for—I can't remember her riding—talks about the fact that she—

Interjection.

Mr Callahan: No, no, not for St Andrew-St Patrick. I was enthralled by your speech, really, but the one who had the guts to vote against the social contract. I can't remember her—

Interjection: Perth.

Mr Callahan: Okay, Perth. You made a comment that you hope employers will cooperate. Well, there's no question that they've got to cooperate, because in every one of these operative sections the word "shall" is used. The word "shall" is defined in legal terms as being mandatory: There's no question of whether they want to or they don't; they have to. In fact, what we're doing is that Big Brother here—and that includes all parties; that's not an indictment of the NDP. We're saying to employers, "You have to."

I'll tell you something: I think that's a real mistake. I intend to speak next, hopefully, in greater depth to try to elucidate on what I'm saying, but I think we're really making a very serious error in terms of thinking that we, as a government of whatever political stripe, have the right to tell people what they shall do. I once had a fellow whom I knew very well, and he said to me: "The only place government should be involved is in areas where people can't be protected in the normal society. If they can't do it better than the people out there in the free world, they shouldn't be doing it at all."

Mr Perruzza: Just to respond very briefly, I appreciated the comments that were made by my honourable colleague the member for St George-St David and some of the other comments that were made in response. She made a comment which was responded to by my good friend the member for Scarborough West, Mr Curling. In fact, he in his response completely contradicted what the member for Oriole said about this legislation, a completely different opinion, and a completely different

opinion from the member who sits right behind the honourable member for Scarborough West, Barbara Sullivan. So you've got three Liberals: Mr Curling; another Liberal, Elinor Caplan; another Liberal, Mrs Sullivan. All three had a completely different interpretation of or a different opinion about what this legislation would or would not achieve.

Mrs Caplan talked about how they did it in 1987 in their sort of backroom style of equity and said: "We'll put a face to it, because there are some people there who are complaining that they don't have access and can't break through all of the different ceilings. We'll make them happy and set up a process and do that and just give it some words, and that's what you should be doing. But instead, my God, you're setting up a quota system, and who knows where we'll be tomorrow."

Then you had my honourable friend Mr Curling, the member for Scarborough West, stand up and say: "Geez, this doesn't do anything. It doesn't go anywhere. It doesn't achieve what we want it to achieve." Hopefully the member from south Brampton will put it all to bed and he'll lay what the Liberal position is right on the line and on the record here today.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for St Andrew-St Patrick has two minutes in response.

Ms Akande: I hate to repeat, but I think I must. People continue to ask about the numerical goals and to equate those numerical goals with quotas. I have to explain again that numerical goals are the standard by which the employer assesses what he or she has achieved, and it's important to have those standards. It's important for us to say, if we are intending in a direction, whether or not or how far we have reached. We use them in many situations.

The point about it is that if people are intent on achieving a goal, it is extremely important that they be able to assess whether they have done so at the end of the day. It tells them whether they must increase their effort. It tells them whether they must change their hiring practices. It tells them whether the people they have in their human resources are the appropriate people for achieving those goals.

If I can make one point even more clearly than I have, I must speak to the fact that the numerical goals, though they are our standards, are not the same as quotas. They are the yardstick by which all of us will assess how far we've come at the end of the day, and they are necessary, because without them, one would not be able to assess and therefore may not strive to achieve what is expected of them: the reflection of the society in every workplace in this province.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Callahan: As I said in my two-minute comments, this is a very difficult bill to deal with because we are dealing with a very fragile issue. I've been

accused of being partisan. Sometimes I rise above that; I hope that happens. I think this is an issue that rises above partisanship.

Not many people know this, but I was born in the United States and came to Canada by choice, so I am an immigrant, if that's what you want to call it. I lived as a young man through the terrible treatment that the United States, particularly in the southern United States, gave to black Americans.

I was enthralled, as I'm sure many people were, including Canadians, by people like Martin Luther King, John Kennedy, but more importantly, Martin Luther King. He was not a politician. John Kennedy, as much as I admired him, was as much a politician as anyone in this House. He would say things, as would other politicians, that were considered to be politically acceptable, politically expedient, and perhaps said more in the vein of trying to get yourself elected or getting on an even level with the people in your community.

I think this is the type of bill, this type of measure, that is not one that should be that type of one-upmanship. I do have to say, though, that in watching what the United States did to black people and the agony that those people had to go through in order to obtain proper rights, the murders that took place in the southern United States, the terrible inhumane activities of white—I won't use "Caucasian." I object to the word "Caucasian"; it's "white." What they did to these people with impunity in most of the southern United States was unacceptable. I don't think I have to say that. I don't think I have to hear, "Yes, you're right," from anybody in the House. That was the case.

1710

I think Canadians are entirely different in some respects—and I will qualify that in a moment—from Americans in that we are prepared, as we have seen, to look at people in terms not of what they look like, be they in a wheelchair, be they blind, be they deaf, be they black, be they white, be they yellow, be they green, whatever. I think one of the hallmarks of being Canadian is the fact that we are prepared to accept people on the basis of a principle that far surpasses any of our years on this earth in terms of accepting people for people.

I think that being the case, the problem we have is we look at the United States and we always seem to be sort of mesmerized by what's going on there. We look at the black situation in the United States. There's no question it was totally unjust—

Mrs Marland: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Since the government chooses to continue the business of this House in July, I think we should have a quorum present.

Mr Callahan: I would ask the member not to call a quorum, because what it does is it eats up the time.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent to cancel the quorum call? No. Please, is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals (Mr Alex D. McFedries): A quorum is present, Speaker.

Mr Callahan: I've lost my train of thought, unfortunately, but I'm going to try to get back on it. We as Canadians tend to watch so much US television, we're affected so much by US activities, that we tend to overreact in this country. I think Canadians have a very genuine belief in viewing people as they are as opposed to where they come from or what their religion is and so on.

As I said, I think that this is today. But in the past, I can tell you, the member for St Andrew-St Patrick, as a visible minority—and I really don't understand what that means. I, as a Catholic, ran for mayor in my community way back. I won't tell you when. I had people working for me going from door to door and people would actually say to them, "Do you know what he is?" When they'd come back and tell me that, I'd say, "What do they mean by 'what he is'?"

My wife was never terribly involved in politics, but she'd get calls at night saying, "Are you really a Catholic?" My wife would say yes, and that would be the end of the conversation; she'd hang up.

I have to say today that in my riding of Brampton South, that is no longer the situation. I can remember times, and many of you are probably too young to remember this, when Jewish people were not allowed into a golf club because they were Jewish. What a silly reason not to let people into the golf club. I could see if the guy or the lady had a good handicap. Then you'd say "You can't join the golf club," because you don't want any ringers. But to deny them access because they were Jewish was absolutely ridiculous.

I would challenge anybody in this House or those who are not here and ask them whether they've ever told a Polish joke or a Newfie joke or a Jewish joke, or a whatever joke. When we tell that joke, we think it's funny. We think what we're doing is telling something that's funny. It's funny for everybody other than that Newfoundlander, that Polish person, that Jewish person, that Catholic person, that East Indian, that black person. And our kids are standing there right by us as we're telling that joke and saying, as my kids do, and I'm very proud of them for that, "You know, Dad"—and I have to confess, I have done that. I've heard a joke that was funny. I've told it, and they'll say, "Dad, that's racist," or "That's sexist."

That tells me that what's happening in our society is we've moved from the step when I ran for mayor, that being a Catholic was a negative factor, to something that has now changed. Our young people are now moving through a better understanding of what life is all

about and what human beings are all about in terms of accepting people on the basis of who they are, not what colour they are, not what religion they are and so on.

I think that's really the way that we're going to evolve. We are evolving. We're evolving into a much more humane society. We don't need governments to tell us what to do.

There will always be rednecks. I feel sorry for those people. I really feel sorry for those people. I think those are the people who deserve more of our empathy and our concern than any other people, because they're misinformed. They're prepared to sacrifice the benefit of a true human relationship with another human being on the basis that they're black, Jewish, Catholic, East Indian, whatever.

So what I say to you is, if I felt that legislation was important, if I felt this evolution was not going to take place in a way that would solve this problem for us and might be solved as well through our example for our children in terms of what we are trying to do, then I would suggest that's when government has to act.

In the United States, there was no question that the civil rights legislation had to be brought in. But you had a long history of people who, if you'll forgive me and they'll forgive me, were ignorant. They were people who thought that blacks were people who were overindulging in sex, were mentally inferior, were not entitled to any of the benefits of other Americans, and they treated them that way. They murdered them. They killed them. They didn't even have the guts to do it with their face not masked. They had to wear white, which I always found rather interesting. They would wear a white hood, which is usually the symbol of innocence, and they would murder these people. That's why government had to act.

I don't see that in Canada. I really think you do a great disservice to the people in this country. You do a great disservice to women. Women are doing fine, thank you. We introduced pay equity. I agree with that. I think pay equity has given women an opportunity to perhaps jump-start those people in business who thought that women should perhaps be paid less.

Interjection.

Mr Callahan: That's another issue. The member raises the question of assault of women. I find in our free society that it's incredible that freedom of speech allows us to introduce a video game of slashers, a video game where women are being emaciated, are being treated in an improper fashion. With our kids playing those games, what do we expect? You see the crap that's put on the bookshelves of bookstores in terms of women being treated like they are animals, that they're just here for our benefit, for our ingratiation. What do you expect from your kids?

But, you know, we won't touch that. That's a sacred

cow. The minute you try to touch that, you'll have the people who are in—you know, freedom of speech, the Guccionis and the other people, who make money out of this. They make money out of white slavery.

So I say to you that if you really want to speak out in terms of what's happening to women, then perhaps we should take a different attitude towards women. Perhaps we should project a different attitude. Perhaps we should remember that they're equal partners with men and that in fact in many cases they surpass us.

But what do we do? We find a government that—and you know, I don't criticize you from a political standpoint, because we introduced employment equity, and, as I've said, I'm not sure that that was right to do, because I don't think government should get involved in this type of thing until we've had an opportunity to evolve as human beings, personally, without the necessity of legislation.

1720

But you're now jumping in. You may disagree with this; you may disagree that this is a piece of legislation that requires quotas, but it does. I think any fairminded person who read this legislation would understand that is exactly what you're suggesting.

I took a look at the employment application. My son Timothy—and if he's watching, he'll kill me—gave me a copy of the employment application. I'll tell you, if you had tried to present that employment application 10 years ago, you would have been prosecuted under whatever was the existing facility then. Maybe it wasn't the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

It asks questions like, are you black or white? I think it asks your religion, I'm not sure. Are you East Indian? Are you disabled? Are you whatever? I'll tell you something: If I had to show that application to any fairminded person outside of this country, they would look at it and say: "What have you got up there? Have you got a bunch of right-wing people who are trying to hire people who are of that bent?" I mean, to me it's an embarrassment.

When my son showed it to me I was so incensed by the wording of it that it was almost like in the days of 1945 where when a Jewish person applied to a golf course, they asked: "What's your religion? What's your national background?" That was struck down by the courts even in those days because it was totally innocuous. I have to say to you that the application that emanates from this legislation is absolutely revulsive. I suggest to you that the application tells me that this legislation is in fact a quota system.

I want to say to you, if you had a child who was learning-disabled, a learning-disabled child is not like a person in a wheelchair or a person who's blind, who has a visible disorder. Do you think that person is going to list that he or she is disabled? Yet they're entitled to the

benefits under this act of being a disabled person.

Do you think that they're going to admit that they've got a learning disability? Maybe they don't know. Maybe they can't afford to go to a psychologist, because psychologists are not covered under OHIP and a lot of poor people in this province can't afford to take their children to find out if they're learning disabled.

So in fact what you've done by this bill is you have denied these kids the opportunity and, let me tell you, they're legion. You look around your individual ridings and you will find that there are kids out there who have a learning disability, be it attention-deficit, be it something more dramatic like dyslexia. But the more common one is attention-deficit.

These are the kids who are in our correctional facilities in many areas. Yet I learn that your government—and I'm not getting political, believe me. I'm trying to say that in your correctional facilities they're now getting rid of librarians. That is absolutely offensive. These are people in there who are illiterate. Part of the reason they're there is because they're illiterate, and we're taking away librarians because we consider them to be a luxury. My God, I'd rather have librarians there so they could learn to read than to lie back on the floor and read skin magazines and watch television.

The Attorney General, for whatever reason, and she probably has good reasons, is about to eliminate something like 800 or 900 jobs of women, court reporters. They're going to replace them with this great magic—and, Pat, you may be next to go—they're coming up with this great recorder that will allow all of the evidence from trials to be taken by this recorder and typed up by people in a typing pool, probably for five bucks an hour.

How can you legitimately say to the public of this province that you care about women when you bring in that type of thing? It's not even brought in through legislation. I heard about it through the court reporters. I mean, how can you say that?

We're about to bring in Bill 4. Has anybody read it? Does anybody realize that the hard-to-serve, the learning-disabled, the disabled kids, will no longer have an opportunity to go before a tribunal and determine whether or not they have ample facilities in that school to look after them?

What I say to you is, if you want to do things, scrap this legislation, or certainly listen to the public meaningfully. If the things I've said are the things that are told to you, get rid of the legislation. What you say to the people is, you develop an environment in which people are allowed to achieve on the basis of their ability.

I have no problem with disabled people, they have been given short shrift, but I've got people in my community—the Portuguese community in Brampton is probably the largest community of people culturally in

Canada. They have never asked for anything. They've always worked hard, they've achieved and they've gotten results. Italian people in this community have achieved, worked hard and got results. None of us came here originally. The native population, what do we do to them? We sell them booze and we treat them like Uncle Tom. We give them everything. We never demand anything from them or give them a challenge. It's no wonder these people are having difficulties.

Do you think this legislation in any way, shape or form is going to help any of those people? I suggest to you that it's totally inappropriate. Quite frankly, I would prefer to see no bill at all.

I see that one of our members has his young daughter here. I think she would tell you that when she sees a young person in school, she doesn't look at that person and say: "Are you black? Are you East Indian? Are you Jewish? Are you Catholic? Are you Protestant?" She accepts that person on the basis of a young person whom she likes.

Interjection.

Mr Callahan: My children did that too, but you can't blind yourself either. Kids recognize differences. Hopefully, if you can bring them up in such a way that those differences are surpassed and suppressed in terms of what's important, in terms of that human being, you will find I think that we don't need legislation, that we can get on with our way of life without the necessity of government being in the pocket and directing what we should do. I think we'll have a far more beneficial, a far richer and a far more lasting appreciation of one another as human beings.

Mrs Marland: In rising today to speak to Bill 79, An Act to provide for Employment Equity for Aboriginal People, People with Disabilities, Members of Racial Minorities and Women, I have a great deal that I would like to talk about. Unfortunately, because we are into the new House rules which limit the debate in this House, in order that this majority government which controls the House rules as well as the House business may pass as much of its legislation as possible, it has really cut off the opposition at the knees. If we do not comply with their House rules, then they use another House rule which in fact limits debate totally, and that is of course a closure motion.

It's very interesting, because what we're dealing with here today, on the surface, is a bill that in fact we would all want to support. It is a policy which I believe there isn't a person who serves in this Legislature doesn't believe in. We all believe in equity. But I want to talk about something greater than legislating equity in a bill. I want to talk about equity of opportunity.

In my opinion, Bill 79 will not effect opportunity for those people today who do not have it. There's a tremendous irony in part I of this bill, which reads as

follows, "All people are entitled to equal treatment in employment in accordance with the Human Rights Code."

1730

Now, this point that I'm about to make was one which I fortunately had the opportunity of discussing with a colleague who is a lawyer. He is a person, both on a personal and professional basis, for whom I have a very high regard. He is a partner of Malach and Fidler. I'm speaking of the member for Willowdale, Charles Harnick. To discuss some of these issues with Charles is an opportunity I would encourage any member of this House to have.

The irony is that here we have a government that's trying to pass this legislation where the entitlement of the bill is that, "All people are entitled to equal treatment in employment in accordance with the Human Rights Code." This is the same government that today in this House showed no concern for the fact that the present chair of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, which is responsible, as the arbitrator and final court of appeal, for the Human Rights Code enactment, has now said she supports a report where people accused of racism would be considered guilty until proven innocent.

What a contradiction this is, what a regressive day for Ontario, to know that the newly appointed chair of the Ontario Human Rights Commission believes that on the subject of racism, people who are accused of it would be considered guilty until proved innocent. What a complete reversal of the ethic in justice where people are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

What a sad thing to think that Bill 79, as it pivots on the Human Rights Code in its entitlement, might be referred for arbitration, and subsequently a decision, to the Ontario Human Rights Commission. I could almost accept anyone, any head of any government agency, board or commission, making an outrageous statement that people must be considered guilty before proven innocent, any agency, board or commission but the Ontario Human Rights Commission. That government agency, above all, has a tremendous responsibility, which is paramount, to the rights of every individual in this province.

When we talk about employment equity, it's very interesting when you start to read some of the material that's available from the government. I find the section on the workforce survey very interesting, because here we have a survey that's given to employees and the key to this survey is self-identification. Workers will decide if they wish to identify themselves as a member of a designated group. They will not be required to identify themselves if they don't want to.

Each employee will be given the chance to answer several simple questions. Those questions ask people to identify themselves if they are aboriginal, a person with

a disability, a member of a racial minority, a woman. Employees are not required to answer the questions, but they must return their copy of the survey to their employer.

Now, isn't that just marvellous. I wish somebody could explain to me what is accomplished by saying that employees are not required to answer the questions, but they must return the questionnaire. Is this saying that the government is going to be dependent on the individual employees to identify themselves with a designated group? If so, and those employees choose not to be identified as a designated group, how will the government go to the next portion of the enforcement of its bill, which is that of meeting the numerical goals that are also going to be set for everyone except the very small employers?

When we look at the setting of numerical goals—it has been stated earlier this afternoon that all we're dealing with is quotas—I want to tell you that there are constituents in my riding of Mississauga South who choose not to be identified in any of these designated groups. They choose to be treated equally, and as soon as you designate them as being different, then they're not treated equally. That's the whole point.

You can't, on the one hand, say to your employees, "Tell me which of these groups you fall into," because what you do by that very action in fact is segregate them more. You're asking them to say, "Look at me. I'm different. I'm one of these designated groups. I'm different. I'm not the same"—as what? "I'm not the same as the majority. I'm not the same as a minority. I'm not the same as anyone else. I'm different."

That's where I think this bill is unjust. It's asking people to identify themselves as being different. If you talk to any of the groups that are listed in this bill, you will find that the last thing they want is to be referred to as a person with a disability. They don't want to be referred to in these categories.

While we talk about barriers and how barriers can be identified, I think we would do far better to talk about opportunities. This government has so little commitment to opportunities in this province for people of any group, but particularly the people they want to put into these designated groups under this bill.

I give you as an example the 5,000 people who demonstrated on the front lawn here at Queen's Park last fall who, yes, did have disabilities. They had developmental disabilities. Five thousand people came to say to this government, "Don't cancel your sheltered workshop programs." They came to this government to say, "I have a child who when they're 21 no longer has any programs accessible to them." They came to this government to say, "Once my child turns 21, and is no longer a responsibility of the school board system, there are now no more programs available."

This government has the absolute gall to bring in a bill and call it an Act to provide for Employment Equity when it does not have a commitment today to equity of opportunity in employment for any specific group. It's not good enough, and the public will see through this completely, that it's just more words. You can't on the one hand take \$4 million out of shelter workshops in this province and on the other hand say, "We're going to require employers to hire quotas of people in certain designated groups."

1740

By the way, if you don't hire, if you fail to meet the quota requirement, the fine under section 38 is \$50,000. Now, if you want to really see this province slide backwards in terms of moving to develop equity of opportunity in this province, start fining the employers \$50,000 for non-compliance, \$50,000 because they are not meeting so-called numerical goals.

It's like this government choosing not to talk about "user fees"; it prefers to talk about "copayments" in the health care system. What a scam. But fortunately, the public understands now that a copayment in the health care system, that a copayment in terms of care for the elderly—I was at a meeting last night in Mississauga with over 200 people there who were shocked to find out that now, in order to accommodate their loved ones in nursing homes and homes for the aged, they have to pay an additional \$330 a month as a copayment. They're not fooled by this. They know what a copayment is. They know it's a user fee. The employers who read the requirements of Bill 79 understand very clearly that a numerical goal is nothing more or nothing less than quotas.

But the travesty of the whole essence of this bill is that the very people they are pretending to help will not get helped, because these people want to be treated equally and have that opportunity because of who they are not as a difference, but who they are as a likeness. If you're really sincere about giving people in this province equal opportunity for employment, then you have to demonstrate it with better wording in a far better-drafted bill than Bill 79; you do not do it by fining employers \$50,000 if they don't meet an arbitrary quota that's assigned to them by this government.

I have had it indicated to me by the whip that we are running out of time. It is unfortunate, because I feel very passionately about this subject. I feel very strongly about the fact that those people for whom I speak, namely, our disabled community in particular, which happens to be my personal portfolio for our Ontario PC caucus—the very thing those people don't want is more segregation and identification by labels. They just want the opportunities.

This bill is asking them not only to identify themselves but it's asking the employer to hire them because of what they are, whether they're in a wheelchair,

whether they're on a cane, whether they have a seeing-eye dog, any number of circumstances. They're not being asked to hire because of who they are as individuals in terms of their own ability. They don't want any special treatment; they just want to be treated equally.

How is it that under the Ontario Human Rights Code, where we have a definition that all people are entitled to equal treatment, we have to now pass a bill that sets that aside and starts to qualify and quantify people with special needs into special designated groups?

It's distasteful, it's barbaric, and frankly, I have a great deal of concern and cannot support this bill because it's not in the best interests of those people who need our support and our help the most.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? This, I believe, would bring us to the wrapup of the second reading of Bill 79.

Mr Fletcher: It's truly an honour for me to be able to close second reading on Bill 79, the Employment Equity Act, on behalf of the Minister of Citizenship. It gives me an opportunity to demonstrate my wholehearted support for this important piece of legislation. It also allows me to express my belief that every person in this province who believes in fairness and who believes in equity believes in this piece of legislation.

I've worked on workplace issues for many years. I've spoken to workers from all walks of life who've suffered indignities and injustices. I've witnessed the debilitating side effects of discrimination and racism, and I've worked alongside working people and heard how insensitive employment practices have affected their lives. It was these stories and these experiences that made me determined a long time ago that I would fight all forms of injustice in the workplace.

That is why I'm pleased to be able to stand here today and declare my support for employment equity. There's absolutely no question, in my mind, that this legislation's time has come.

Those of us who've worked on workplace issues over the years, such as health and safety and employment standards, have also recognized that such policies must benefit both workers and employers. Workplace change simply isn't feasible and will not work if it doesn't affect both groups, and that's why I'm able to support employment equity.

I believe it brings real change and real benefits to the workplace for members of the designated groups, to their coworkers and to their employers.

I could never support the replacement of one form of discrimination by another, as some in this House have charged employment equity will do. I could not condone preferential treatment of one group of workers over another, as some have suggested this will do, and I could certainly never accept the hiring of unqualified people over qualified people, as others have said this

bill will do.

To support legislation that had any of these results would be to give up everything I have fought for for so long in the workplace, and that just wouldn't be possible for me and it wouldn't be possible for members of my party.

Employment equity isn't about reverse discrimination or preferential treatment or hiring practices of the unqualified, and I think it's an insult to the designated groups and to all working people to even suggest that is what it is. It's about correcting historical inequity.

In the first step towards employment equity, employers will conduct a workforce survey to identify which workers are members of the four designated groups and in which occupations they are found.

Employment equity is also about hiring people because of their attributes and their skills, regardless of their aboriginal status, disability, race or gender. An employment systems review will identify which workplace policies and practices are barriers to full participation by the designated groups, and employment equity is about ensuring that employment practices are fair and non-discriminatory. The end result is a workforce that is representative of the community.

1750

I have to conclude that people who use the arguments I've just outlined as a reason to oppose employment equity either don't understand it or they don't want to. I found when I explained to many working people what employment equity is and why it is so necessary, they clearly grasp why it will be so important in the long-range organizational planning and consequently to our future together. Employment equity is no more and no less than a human resources tool that management can use to organize and address change. Now more than ever we need such a tool.

It's become something of a cliché to say that our best resource is our human resources, but like every cliché, this statement, no matter how much it's been overused, is still true: People are our best resource but only when we maximize their potential, and we only maximize their potential when we treat them fairly. If we exclude any member of the labour force from the workforce, if we hinder anyone's career development, if we underutilize any person's skills for reasons that have nothing to do with their ability, then we are doing a serious disservice not only to those people but to our economy and to our province.

Employment equity is designed to ensure that we maximize the potential of all of our people and our human resources. That's the key component to employment equity, and curiously, most often it is most overlooked by the detractors and yet is one of the major reasons why people like myself support this legislation.

We all profit when employers use equitable employ-

ment practices to hire, retain, train and promote their people. We benefit in different ways and we also get very real advantages as a province when the skills of our entire workforce are helped to gain a competitive edge in the global marketplace.

One of the other aspects of this legislation that is another considerable benefit to all employees is that their participation in the workplace decision-making will be greatly enhanced. For the first time in unionized workplaces, employers and bargaining agents will have joint responsibility for employment equity. They will responsible together for working on all of the aspects of implementation such as the workforce survey, identifying and removing barriers and so on. In non-unionized workplaces, employers will consult with their employees, including designated group members, on the same steps.

Joint responsibility will consequently enable employers and employees to participate in issues that affect both groups and which will result in policies and practices that address joint concerns.

As we move into the next stage of the bill's development, the discussion of the legislation in legislative committee, the hearings, it will be important to keep in the forefront of our minds what the end result of this legislation is, fairness in the workplace, and in order to achieve this goal, the legislation must be practical as well as effective.

Let's also keep a clear focus on the need for this legislation, a rapidly changing labour force, barriers that prevent participation of all workers. Let us make sure that we understand how employment equity will address these issues by updating human resources management practices. Then let's keep an eye on the future and how employment equity will bring us all the rewards of a workforce that is able to fill its potential.

The Acting Speaker: I was advised by the officers at the table here that this may have sounded like a wrapup. However, we have to go to questions and/or comments.

Mr Callahan: A very quick one, Mr Speaker. While I was speaking I got a call from a constituent of mine who indicated that the feds have already screwed up unemployment insurance, but this could result in a situation where a young person who wanted to apply for unemployment insurance or welfare would have to fill out one of these applications. If they took the sense that they were objecting to what was in that application, they may very well be denied unemployment insurance or welfare.

The Acting Speaker: Other questions or comments? The member for Guelph has two minutes in response.

Mr Fletcher: I won't take the full two minutes; just to respond that I believe, as I said yesterday, the first step to employment equity is for all people and all

places to open their minds, and once those minds are open, then the workplaces will be open. If we can come to that point when everyone can participate fully in our society, in our workplaces, then we will have a society where there is no discrimination, and the objective of this is, as everyone has said—yes, it is to reverse discrimination.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? Because the minister moved second reading, the minister would have the opportunity now of wrapping up.

Hon Elaine Ziemba (Minister of Citizenship and Minister Responsible for Human Rights, Disability Issues, Seniors' Issues and Race Relations): I'm very pleased to stand in my place today and to wrap up this very fine debate that we've had on employment equity. I must say to all members of the House today that employment equity, about fairness in the workplace, about making sure that every one of our citizens has an equal opportunity, is foremost in the principles of employment equity and the legislation thereof.

I also want to say that it's very important, as we move through the next stages of debate, whether it's debate in the committee, whether it's debate on the regulations and the discussion of the regulations, that we still continue to work together to make sure that this bill is the most effective and has the best results.

There has been a lot of talk today and in the several days of debate about the various aspects of employment equity. One point that was missed very clearly, and I would like to just take a few minutes to talk about that, is about making sure that the qualitative measures change in the workplace, about making sure that there are provisions in the workplace to treat everybody fairly and equitably.

Yes, goals and timetables are needed to measure if those qualitative measures are working, but the most important thing we can do with this legislation is to make sure that people take the time to look at their workplace, to remove the barriers that exist, whether they're systemic or whether they're intentional, and to start to build towards a more harmonious way of treating each of our individuals in the workplace and to make sure that there's equal opportunity not just for hiring, but also for getting the promotion and training that are required if we are going to see that there is true access to the whole aspect of the workplace.

As I sum up, I hope that we all can sit down and discuss how we can make the bill stronger, yes, to have it more effective and to have the best possible legislation that we want. It's all very well and fine for members of this House to be critical, but let's start to work together to make sure that this bill can really do what we intend it to do, and that's about having a truly equal society, one where people are respected, treated with

dignity and treated for who they are and for their abilities and their qualifications, not because of the colour of their skin or because of being a certain gender.

In wrapping up, I extend that invitation to all members of the House. I think that we can really, truly have the best possible legislation and at the same time lead the way in Canada and in North America and show that we can live in a very just and equitable society.

The Acting Speaker: Ms Ziemba has moved second reading of Bill 79. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour please say "aye."

All those opposed please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; a 30-minute bell.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. I have in my hand a correspondence to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly which reads as follows, dated Toronto, July 15, 1993, from the office of the chief government whip:

"Pursuant to standing order 28(g), I request that the vote on second reading of Bill 79, An Act to provide for Employment Equity for Aboriginal People, People with Disabilities, Members of Racial Minorities and Women, moved by the Honourable Elaine Ziemba, be deferred until 5:55 pm, Monday, July 19, 1993."

That will be the occurrence. The honourable government House leader.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): It being almost 6 of the clock, pursuant to standing order 55, I would like to announce the business for the coming week.

On Monday, July 19, we will give third reading to Bill 164, the auto insurance. Following that, we will give second reading to Bills 32 and 34, the vehicle transfer package.

On Tuesday, July 20, we will give third reading consideration to Bill 96, OTAB.

The remainder of the week's business will be announced.

On the morning of Thursday, July 22, during private members' public business, we will consider ballot item 23, second reading of Bill 59, standing in the name of Mr McClelland, and ballot item 24, Bill 60, standing in the name of Mr Johnson.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): It now being almost 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday, July 19 at 1:30 pm.

The House adjourned at 1800.

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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 19 July 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 19 juillet 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

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Monday 19 July 1993

The House met at 1332.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TORONTO MOLSON INDY

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): I am delighted to recognize a new Canadian accomplishment: 24-year-old Paul Tracy of West Hill, Ontario, thrilled a record crowd of 66,225 by winning the Molson Indy in Toronto this past weekend. The total weekend crowd was also a record, with 159,097 fans attending.

This is the eighth Molson Indy in Toronto and the first one to have been won by a Canadian. The win, Paul Tracy's third this year, comes just one week after having won the Cleveland Grand Prix, as well as winning the Long Beach, California, race earlier in the season. He completed the 103 laps in one hour, 53 minutes and 58.951 seconds. He won the race by a margin of 13.02 seconds.

When you consider that in order to win, Paul had to beat such champion drivers as Emerson Fittipaldi, Danny Sullivan, Bobby Rahal, Al Unser Jr, Mario Andretti and Nigel Mansell, it was an outstanding accomplishment.

The win by Paul Tracy and the performance of Scott Goodyear have firmly established the reputation of Canadians as major players in the world of motor sport. This follows on the reputation of the late, great Gilles Villeneuve, who won the 1978 Canadian Grand Prix Formula One world championship.

The Molson Indy race focuses attention of motor sport fans from around the world, and to have a Canadian win it brings recognition and pride to Canada, Ontario and Toronto. I am sure that all members will join me in congratulating Paul Tracy on his historic achievement and wishing him well in his future endeavours.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): The last NDP budget clobbered us with a \$2-billion tax hike and a \$10-billion deficit which destroyed 50,000 jobs.

I have heard from constituents that they agree with Mike Harris when he says that Ontario can't afford any more taxes, because higher taxes kill jobs. They agree with Mike Harris that Ontario needs a new budget without any tax increase, definite permanent cuts in government waste and a prosperity plan to create jobs and renew the economy.

After working more than six and a half months for the government, the people of Ontario finally begin working for themselves tomorrow. July 20 is tax freedom day. Thanks in large part to the more than 60 tax increases imposed by the Liberal and NDP govern-

ments over the last eight years, the average Ontarian now spends more than half of his or her time just to pay taxes.

When you consider that Ontario is now one of the highest-taxed jurisdictions in North America, is it any wonder that consumer spending is so low and unemployment so high? When you consider that tax freedom day arrived for most Americans about two months ago, is it any wonder that fewer investors and companies are choosing to locate in Ontario, meaning more lost jobs?

The tax-and-spend policies of the last eight years have cost us our credit rating, saddled us with enormous deficits and crippled the economic engine that creates new jobs and opportunities in this province. Ontario needs new direction, new leadership to make tax freedom day a much easier and less painful event. Unfortunately, they won't get it under the Liberals or the NDP.

GREATER NIAGARA GENERAL HOSPITAL

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): Thirty-five years ago, on July 16, 1958, the most modern hospital in Canada was officially dedicated, that is, Greater Niagara General Hospital in Niagara Falls. It was built for approximately \$3 million, which was half the usual cost of hospital construction at that time, due to an innovative, horizontal design.

GNGH has continued to establish itself as an innovator in health care, with the most up-to-date facilities and progressive programs, such as the quick response team, a provincial pilot project; one of the highest day surgery rates in all Ontario; being among the first to implement the Roy nursing model for health needs assessment.

In 1993, it will mark the beginning of a new era at GNGH by the acquisition of a truly scientific wonder: the helical CT scanner. This new era was symbolized by the unveiling of the new logo last Friday at the birthday party. This new logo is a visual symbol of our bright, new future full of hope and promise.

I want to thank all the staff, the physicians and volunteers for their vision for GNGH as the very finest of health care facilities. This vision is supported by our recently awarded three-year accreditation. This is the 12th such honour, adding up to 36 consecutive years of excellence.

We all know that to preserve our quality health care system in Ontario, we must change, and GNGH is leading the way.

KRISTEN FRENCH

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): On Saturday morning, hundreds of St Catharines residents gathered at Jaycee Garden Park to witness the unveiling of a memorial to Kristen French, whose life was taken in a

brutal murder in April 1992.

Over the past several months Donna and Doug French and members of the family have participated in so many ceremonies of this nature and have been a source of strength for all families who have experienced a tragedy of this nature.

As we witnessed the unveiling of the memorial, everyone present could not help but be emotionally moved by the memories of Kristen French and the events which have transpired since the taking of her life last year. Yet the words of her father, Doug French, gave inspiration to a community, which has shared the tragedy of the family in a very personal way.

The St Catharines Jaycees have captured the feelings of the people of St Catharines in building a memorial to an innocent, vibrant and wonderful girl who brought so much joy to those around her during her short time on this earth. The inscription on the memorial reads as follows:

"This memorial stands in the memory of Kristen French and all missing children. When Kristen's life was taken, it was as if a living spark escaped and ignited a fire that brought an entire community together in love. Kristen's spirit will live for ever."

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): As I travel throughout my riding I am constantly reminded of the growing discontentment, not only in Grey but in the province as a whole, with this present government.

People are angry, people are frustrated and people are seeking ways to be heard. They feel it is important that the government listen to them and understand what they are saying. They don't want a government which does simply what it wants, but one that actually consults and puts people first.

1340

The evidence of this dissatisfaction can be seen daily after question period when I and members from all three parties use up all the time allotted to bring the concerns of our constituents to the government's attention. I doubt that any government in history has heard so much unrest from the public. My own office daily receives more requests for me to ask the government to rethink its policies on bilingual highway signs, casino gambling, Sunday shopping, auto insurance, the expenditure control plan and the social contract.

Thus far, the government has given no indication that it cares at all about the views of the average citizen. It doesn't matter that the people of Ontario are feeling overtaxed, overregulated and overcome with the intrusiveness of this government whose tentacles are reaching further and further each day into every facet of our lives. The people of this province have had enough. The government should realize this and listen to them.

Does the Premier wonder why his federal cousins

have fallen to 8% in the polls and the NDP leader to 5% behind both Preston Manning and Lucien Bouchard? Will this government ever realize that it cannot steamroller over everyone's rights in the quest for the Holy Grail of socialism?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member's time has expired.

Mr Murdoch: Will they finally realize that this is still a democracy and the people must be heard?

FLORENCE GOOD

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): Today I rise to tip my hat and salute one of life's ordinary superstars. On Saturday I had the pleasure of attending the 75th birthday celebration of Mrs Florence Good of Scarborough. Mrs Good, who is a lifelong resident of Scarborough, has become an integral part of the community. She tells stories of when Scarborough was simply farms and fields across as far as the eye could see.

As a former foster child herself, Mrs Good took in children from the children's aid society for over 25 years. Mrs Good's kindness had a significant impact on their lives and she is directly responsible for helping many of these children to become well-adjusted, happy and contributing members of our society. She still keeps in touch with many of the children, some of whom are living as far away as Australia, and they remember her with great affection.

Mrs Good was always there when her friends or family were in trouble. Many times she has taken in someone who needed a place to stay or has helped out someone who was down on their luck.

I've had the pleasure of knowing Mrs Good for approximately 12 years and she has become a second mother to me. I again tip my hat to Mrs Good on her 75th birthday.

VIOLENCE

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): Serial killer trading cards are now available for sale in Ontario. These cards depict colour sketches of convicted serial killers, mass murderers and organized crime figures. Splotches of red ink depicting blood are smeared across the front of the serial killer cards. The back of the cards give details of the murders, the weapons used and the serial killers themselves.

I am extremely concerned that these cards are sending out the wrong message to our children. Trading cards have traditionally been used to glorify sports heroes. Are we now telling our children that instead of looking up to Roberto Alomar or Wendel Clark as role models and heroes, their heroes should be people like Son of Sam, Karla Homolka and Clifford Olson?

I have written to the federal minister of revenue to urge him to prevent these cards, which are produced in California, from being imported into Canada. I also

intend to introduce a private member's bill this week to restrict the sale of these cards in Ontario.

Personally, I would like to see these cards totally banned in Ontario. However, I'm aware that not everybody agrees with this stand, citing censorship and freedom of speech as their reasons.

But one thing surely we can all agree on is that our children must be protected. Therefore, in the hope that the Ontario government will take up my private member's bill as government legislation, my bill will focus on restricting outlets from selling these cards to children.

Surely this is the very minimum we expect from our government, which says that it cares about our children.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): On July 15 the Minister of Health wrote to long-term care facilities outlining increases for preferred accommodation. It now will cost seniors who are living in nursing homes or homes for the aged \$1,425 per month for semi-private and \$1,730 per month for private. Only seniors in basic or ward accommodation will receive some form of income test to ensure affordability.

As though this were not shocking enough, the minister has told each facility that the maximum percentage of beds that can convert to preferred accommodation is being raised from 45% to 60%, effective immediately. This amounts to luxury apartment conversion, something the NDP has fought for 20 years.

Has the NDP not realized the hardship this 32% increase will create for residents and their family members? Women are especially vulnerable: 71% of the elderly poor are women and women of low income are more likely than those with adequate incomes to suffer from chronic disease, disability and need.

With the increase in fees, compounded with the NDP plan to promote luxury condominium conversion, these women are going to all but be denied room in the government's vision of long-term care reform. Why does the NDP discriminate against seniors? Older women's poverty is a cumulative result of unequal status in society. Bob Rae's policies will cause a further decline in the standard and therefore the dignity for older women in Ontario.

VISITORS FROM GERMANY

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): It is with great pleasure that I rise today to welcome to the Legislature a group of 35 people visiting us from Germany. Members will notice the visitors seated in the public gallery.

This group is here on behalf of the SPD, the Social Democratic Party of Germany. They are travelling across Canada on their own time to learn about our political system, economy, culture and to better inform themselves of issues that are of concern to Canadians.

I'm sure that as they travel the country they will realize that many of the issues that Canadians face are similar to the issues facing their own homeland.

The group has a very heavy schedule. From Toronto, they will travel to Alberta and British Columbia, where they will meet with government officials to discuss a wide range of topics. On behalf of all members, I would like to thank them for taking time to visit Ontario and to learn more about Canada.

It is a special pleasure, of course, and a privilege, as someone who was born in Stuttgart, and a privilege for our caucus to welcome these representatives of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. We appreciate their great interest in Canada, in our province and thank them for visiting our Legislature. We extend to them our very best wishes for an informative, educational and pleasant journey across our country.

Remarks in German.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The Ontario government is committed to the Environmental Assessment Act. Today, I want to reconfirm that commitment by informing members that we are improving the EA process to ensure that it deals with the concerns of all interested parties in a fair and timely manner.

During the past 17 years, this program has helped to reduce the environmental and social impact of countless projects, but we recognize that the EA process has been criticized as being unclear, costly and time-consuming.

In April 1992, my predecessor Ruth Grier announced a series of proposed environmental assessment reforms. Today, I would like to report on the progress of those reforms by releasing a report on the improvements in the EA program.

I am pleased to inform the Legislature that the government review process for EAs has been streamlined. We have reduced the average length of time it takes for the government to complete reviews of the environmental assessments by about 40%, from 16 months to 10 months, and we are committed to lowering it further.

In 1991-92, the government completed more EA reviews than it did in the previous four years combined. This rate was maintained in 1992-93. We are providing better direction to project proponents regarding the requirements they need to meet at the outset of their planning. The public is being consulted earlier in the EA process. We are encouraging simultaneous public and government reviews of environmental assessments rather than one after the other.

Issues are being resolved early in the process. We are using alternative dispute resolution. This approach has

met with great success. In many cases, such as the Waterloo landfill or the Spadina light rail transit project, hearings were not needed because of the use of this alternative process.

The Environmental Assessment Board has been working very hard at improving the administration of hearings. For example, preliminary hearings are used to produce schedules and to determine which issues can be resolved. As well, case managers are assigned to hearings and the EA Board actively pursues dispute resolution outside the formal hearing process.

Much time and effort by the public, the Environmental Assessment Program Improvement Project Task Force and the Ontario Environmental Assessment Advisory Committee have gone into these reforms. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed since 1988.

1350

Clearly, we have significantly improved the EA process through administrative reforms. We intend to proceed further in this direction rather than open up the EA act for legislative change. I believe that proponents, the public and government, need experience working together with these administrative reforms before we can determine if legislative amendments are needed.

We will not extend the EA act to the entire private sector in the near future. However, we have just passed a regulation making select privately constructed municipal road, sewer and water projects subject to the municipal class EA process. We also routinely designate, under the Environmental Assessment Act, all new or proposed private sector landfill sites in a manner consistent with our treatment of public landfill sites.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): This sounds like a full retreat, not what Bob Rae would have said years ago. It's a full retreat.

Hon Mr Wildman: And I will continue to make decisions on citizens' requests to designate individual private sector developments under the act.

The environmental assessment is an important tool for making sound environmental decisions. The reforms I've announced today are improving the EA process by making it clear, timely and fair to everyone.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Responses? The official opposition.

Mr Charles Beer (York North): It is, as my colleague from St Catharines said, a peculiar kind of announcement from the New Democratic government. Usually in the summertime it's not administrative announcements that they get up and have the pleasure to bring forward, but certainly they were after us while we were in government, and I think after the Conservatives when they were in government, for a whole series of actions to be taken.

I think we would have been much happier to have

heard the minister rise in his place today to talk about the cleanup of the beaches. How are we going to get kids back so that they can swim? That used to be the thing that happened along the Great Lakes and in other places, but there's nothing in here that's going to help kids this summer to go to the beach.

My colleague from St Catharines mentioned earlier in this session that the NDP had killed the clean air program, and again, when we saw that the Minister of the Environment was going to be making a statement, we were hoping that perhaps today something might have been coming forward on that.

What about MISA and what the municipalities have been looking for and asking about with respect to all the cutbacks? Those are gone. What about all the toxic hot spots? We'd heard about Hamilton Harbour, the Niagara River. What about the action that this government was going to take to make sure those were all cleaned up?

In reading this statement, there are a couple of lines that I think, for all those who have been involved now over the last year and a half with respect to the selection of waste disposal sites, of dump sites, really jump from the page. "The Ontario government is committed to the Environmental Assessment Act." How could any government that brought in and passed Bill 143 be able to stand and make that statement? The two simply cannot be said in the same breath.

We get to the back page, where the minister notes that, "We also routinely designate under the EA act all new or proposed private sector landfill sites in a manner consistent with our treatment of public landfill sites. And I"—this is the minister speaking—"will continue to make decisions on citizens' requests to designate individual private sector developments under the act."

Again, I say to the minister that all the citizens in Durham and in York and in Peel who have been going through this travesty which is called the Interim Waste Authority process would read this and say: "How does this help us in any way at all? Here we have a Bill 143 which says that all of this is meaningless because Bill 143 does not allow for a true environmental assessment, and yet the government says that it is those principles that they hold dear, that they are going to protect, that they are going to make sure are used in the selection of any new dump. That's certainly not what is going on in York region."

Just last week, my leader, the leader of the official opposition, the member for York Centre and I spent the day with members of the communities in Maple and King going over the various sites and listening to what the concerns are at this late date, as they wait for that final meat cleaver to come down on them in terms of the selection of that final dump site.

There is nothing in here that can give them any comfort about the Environmental Assessment Act or

about the environmental assessment process. This is a technical statement. This is a statement that says, "We're going to try to do better with the process." Everybody is in favour of doing better with the process, but what we need, Minister, is some real action, the kind of action that the former minister was prepared to take, whether it was with respect to clean air, clean water, or a whole host of issues.

Nothing here is going to have a real and immediate impact on people, on those whose lives are affected by problems with the environment, but most particularly, nothing here is going to help ensure that York and Peel and Durham don't have better solutions in front of them with respect to waste disposal.

That's what we're waiting for from this government, that's what we're waiting for from this minister and that's what we would have much preferred to see today than this simple administrative announcement.

Mr Bradley: I would simply note that this is a full retreat from the previous NDP position on the Environmental Assessment Act, though it should not be surprising because it is yet another reversal of NDP policy, policy for which so many people in this province voted in the last election.

It appears that Project X, which was stopped under a Liberal government, has succeeded under an NDP government, and it is my hope—

Hon Mr Wildman: It was started under a Liberal government too, as I recall.

Mr Bradley: Wouldn't it be interesting to note the reaction of the NDP, the environment groups and the hard-nosed environmental journalists if a Liberal government had announced this particular item today.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): How times have changed. If this government were still in opposition on this day, and they stood up in opposition during this July 19 announcement by any other government, they just before lunch would have resolved the cleanup of the beaches; they'd be open. Before lunch they'd have a clean air program second to none. Before lunch the MISA program would be in full blast, operating unbelievably well. Then they'd have lunch, I guess, come to the House and solve the flooding in the Mississippi crisis, since they have resolved all the problems in Ontario.

But now we have them in government—

Hon Mr Wildman: We'll have an EA on the levee.

Mr Stockwell: And they're going to probably ask for an EA in opposition on the flooding of the Mississippi, because they've solved all the problems in Ontario.

But now in government they seem to have run into a brick wall with respect to the beaches, and they've been on the record with respect to cleaning up the beaches, the clean air program, MISA etc, etc.

What do we get from this government today, on July 19, 1993? An announcement by the Minister of Environment and Energy, an announcement that the EA process is working very well. In fact they've sped it up. Isn't it curious how they've sped this up so quickly? And they suggest it's been sped up because they're operating efficiently at abnormal speed, everyone's working very well.

The one very important factor they forgot to mention is how many EA applications they're getting. They didn't mention the fact that since 1989 the sewer and watermain projects are down by 50%—down. Well, time to get your EA approved is down 40%. So it would only stand to reason that maybe it's not the effectiveness with which they're handling the EA process.

Hon Mr Wildman: Oh, how cynical.

Mr Stockwell: Maybe it has something to do with this recession they've helped load this province into, applications are way down for environmental assessment. Why? Because nobody's building anything. Nobody's creating any jobs. So with the recession hitting us, EAs way down, this government stands up and makes a good-news announcement that, "We've sped up the environmental assessment program."

No wonder there are cynics out there who suggest that this government may not be all it's cracked up to be.

Hon Mr Wildman: But you're not one of them.

Mr Stockwell: Oh, I'm not being a cynic. I'm not being a cynic myself, although I would have investigated these numbers before getting here and found this kind of curious conclusion.

I did note, though, in the second to last paragraph, they said—in full retreat, the member for St Catharines had announced—"We will not extend the EA act to the entire private sector in the near future." What does that mean? "We will not extend the EA act to the entire private sector in the near future." It's not, "We won't extend the act." It's not, "We're going to implement the act to the private sector. We're just not going to do it today." Well, are you going to do it tomorrow? I don't know. Are you going to do it next week? Maybe.

This is the kind of response we get from this government. So we have an announcement from the government. It basically says nothing, except, "We might do something tomorrow," and if you stay tuned you'll find out, but probably not.

I say to the Minister of the Environment, I don't think you're going to get any nosebleeds from working so hard, Mr Environment.

1400

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I would like to invite all members to welcome to our chamber this

afternoon, seated in the members' gallery west, a former member for Wentworth North, Mr Eric Cunningham.

I would also like all members to welcome to our chamber this afternoon, seated in the Speaker's gallery, Mr Ray White, the MLA from the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia. He's joined by his wife.

Welcome to our assembly.

ORAL QUESTIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My first question is for the Premier. Premier, your last budget was a direct assault on drivers through new taxes on insurance. Bill 164, to be put before the House for a final vote today, is increasing automobile insurance costs even higher. I ask you today: Will you finally tell us, before this bill comes for final reading, how much are premiums going to increase as a result of Bill 164, what is this new bill going to cost consumers, and where is the NDP promise to lower automobile insurance costs?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I'll be glad to hand this question over the minister responsible.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet and Government House Leader): The Leader of the Opposition's question I guess reflects the fact that she gets all of her information out of press stories. I have said and maintained for some time now that the costs associated with Bill 164, in terms of how much it will impact the consumers of this province, will be 3% to 4%. I stand by those numbers.

The issue which the Leader of the Opposition refers to, though, is unfortunately the exorbitant costs of the package that was imposed in this province referred to as OMPP, the costs of Bill 68, the Liberal package which was passed in 1990; costs which the company actuaries indicate, if it were left in place unamended, would go up by 10% to 15% every year from this point onward; costs which, as some have correctly noted in the media, have been carefully dealt with by the process around Bill 164 and the task force on rehab and long-term care and other cost control mechanisms that we've put in place.

Mrs McLeod: Although the Premier refers the question, I know he is certainly aware of the issue. I know too that he must be aware of the fact that throughout the time this bill has been before the Legislature or in committee, it has been opposed by virtually everyone. It has been opposed by consumers; it's been opposed by brokers; it's been opposed by lawyers. Even Mel Swart has opposed this legislation. Everyone from insurance companies to the consumers has said that this legislation is not good legislation and that this legislation is not necessary.

Even the leader of the third party is trying to tell the government that there is no need to fix something which

is not broken. The leader of the third party is saying what we all know, and that's that for the past two years we have received no public complaints about auto insurance. The OMPP is working. There is no need for this legislation.

I ask this government and this minister: Why are you so intent on imposing new costs on drivers just to justify an election promise? Why are you proceeding with legislation that nobody wants?

Hon Mr Charlton: The Leader of the Opposition seems not to understand even the information she did glean from the press stories on Friday and this morning. The numbers of 7%, 8% and 9% which were being kicked around in those stories are rate applications which the insurance industry is filing under OMPP, this system she claims is working and working well. Those 7%, 8% and 9% increases will eventually be reflected in much higher increases as a result of that legislation if the amendments we're proceeding to put in place, both in Bill 164 and in the regulatory changes that we've negotiated with the industry through the task force on rehab and long-term care and a number of other initiatives that we've undertaken, aren't put in place.

OMPP is broken. It's a system that is imposing, right now, on ratepayers in this province 8% increases on average that we have to deal with and roll back.

Mrs McLeod: As this piece of legislation comes before the House for the last time, we still cannot get any clear information from this government about the impact this bill is going to have on consumers. This government has been less than forthcoming with the consumers of this province. This government is absolutely determined, it seems, to keep adding costs to businesses and to consumers. There is surely no question, from everything that's been heard in committee and in the debate, that Bill 164 is going to give less coverage for more premium costs and that you've added new taxes on top of those increased premium costs to boot. This is going to be a disaster for consumers. We believe, contrary to what the minister has presented, that this bill is likely to add up to 20% to insurance costs, as much as \$200 per insured vehicle.

We understand that the Premier, even as late as this morning, was suggesting that it might be necessary for the government to intervene in order to fix rates if in fact the premium costs go up higher than would seem to be tolerable. That indeed could lead to our fears that this is a backdoor way to public auto insurance, with all of the job dislocation that would accompany that. This bill means more costs for everyone who drives a car or who must drive a car, from unemployed young people, to business, to retired seniors. I ask one last time, why will you not scrap Bill 164? The people of this province cannot afford to pay more for less.

Hon Mr Charlton: I've never heard so much

nonsense all contained in one question as long as I've been in this House. First of all, the Leader of the Opposition has ignored the fact that I've tried to put to her quite clearly that the rate applications that are presently before the Ontario Insurance Commission, some of them approved and some of them being considered, for 7%, 8% and 9%, are under the legislation passed by the Liberal government that was supposed to solve the problem in the province of Ontario. Those rate applications have nothing to do with the piece of legislation that hasn't yet passed and won't be implemented until some time later this year.

Second, she made reference in her comments to scrapping Bill 164 and the other changes we're proceeding with, changes that are designed to put in place some of the regulatory mechanisms that the Liberals failed to put in place under Bill 68, under the Ontario motorist protection plan, to put some cost control mechanisms in place so that we won't end up back in the mess we found ourselves in the middle 1980s with 15%, 20% and 25% increases happening every year. We're proceeding to implement Bill 164 and the other consequent regulatory changes in order to bring some firm stability to pricing in the insurance industry in this province.

VIOLENCE

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My second question, on another topic, is also to the Premier. For some time now we have been expressing our very real concern about the proliferation of slasher films which celebrate the gruesome slaughter of young women. In the spring, the Coalition for the Safety of Our Daughters organized a showing of *Reel Hatred*, which is a compilation of these horrendous films. I can tell you that there was no question in the minds of any of those who attended this showing that these films are abhorrent, that their viewing cannot be condoned on any grounds. I strongly suggest to you today that this is not a censorship issue.

The member for Eglinton introduced a private member's resolution to curb the slasher films. Her resolution was passed unanimously in this Legislature, yet three months later the government has taken no action. Premier, we are all concerned about violence that is directed towards women and we surely all agree that we must act against anything which promotes, which incites, which in any way seems to condone violence. I ask, will you take action before this session ends to act on the private member's resolution which was passed in this House?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I'd refer that to the minister responsible for the Ontario Film Review Board, the Minister for Consumer and Commercial Relations.

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): I certainly welcome the question from the Leader of the Opposition and also wish to congratulate her member who recently came out

against the latest video games. I would like to say that I think we're talking about the real issue here, and that is the graphic, gratuitous, explicit, brutal violence that exists in our society in many forms, including these kinds of slasher films.

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I would like to say that on April 20 I wrote a letter to the then Minister of Justice, the federal minister, urging him and his government to take action against materials which exist for the sole purpose of promoting brutal and graphic violence. In that letter, I specifically mentioned these kinds of serial killer trading card games and slasher films.

To date, I have not received an answer from the federal government. I'm in the process of writing to the new Prime Minister, who used to be the Minister of Justice.

I feel that it very much is within the jurisdiction of the federal government to change the Criminal Code to classify this kind of brutal violence as obscene within the Criminal Code. Until that is done, it makes it very difficult for a provincial jurisdiction to deal directly with that, and I certainly ask her and her colleagues to participate with us in urging the federal government to change the Criminal Code to reflect this kind of graphic horror that we're subjected to these days.

Mrs McLeod: Minister, I sincerely say to you, and through you to the Premier, that we really do need more than words; we need action on this issue now. We need to take actions to deal with what are clearly the most horrendous depictions of violence against women. I would say to you that there are actions which you can take, not just referring to the federal government for actions, but actions which you as the minister responsible for the Ontario Film Review Board can take, and those are the actions which were set out in the resolution presented and passed unanimously in this House.

You'll be aware that one of the reasons the Ontario Film Review Board was created was to ensure public protection and that all the films that go through the Ontario Film Review Board are required to reflect community standards. Surely, even those who are totally opposed to censorship would agree that slasher films do not meet any type of community standards.

I was dismayed that recently, in a move that I recognize was controversial, some members of the board attempted to weaken the guidelines for adult sex films. The guidelines are supposed to reflect community standards, but I wonder how the board can claim to be reflecting community standards when there's no mechanism to allow for public input into board guidelines.

Would you agree to hold a public review of the Ontario film board guidelines so the public does have a chance to voice its opinions and community standards will be truly reflected in the decisions of the board?

Hon Ms Churley: I'm sure that over the coming summer months the members of the board, including the chair, will be seeking the input of a number of interested groups and individuals around this very subject.

She's raised a really interesting point, that the technology of today, which has advanced just over the past couple of years and continues to do so, makes it very, very difficult for provincial boards, which do represent the community—they are made up of individuals from all walks of life—to try to reflect community standards. They do go out in their communities; they go out and talk to people and hear what has to be said. But as the minister responsible for women's issues said last week in response to a question about the video game, these are very complex and difficult issues, especially with the change of technology.

We know, for instance, that we don't want any government and any one minister projecting his or her personal viewpoint on what is best for Ontarians to see or not see. That is why we appoint individual people from the community to a board to look at these issues.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Churley: They are doing that these days. They are doing a total review and will be communicating with interested parties over the coming summer months.

Mrs McLeod: There should be no question about this. There surely is no question that slasher films violate community standards and that none of us in fact would ever want to live in a community which could condone such films. If it takes a public inquiry into community standards for that message to get through to the Ontario Film Review Board, and indeed to your government, let that public inquiry take place, because I think the issues of censorship and the issues of what is truly a blatant violation of community standards and materials which in fact do incite violence are not being clearly drawn.

I have another example of violent culture which is being distributed in Ontario. You may be well aware of the serial killer trading cards that are available in Ontario collector stores. They are even available to young people to collect, since there is no ban on their restriction or their sale to minors. The editor in chief of the California company that produces the serial killer trading cards has said they will definitely be doing a Karla Homolka card as soon as they can get all the information.

Again, I say that I surely think we all agree that we have to take immediate action to deal with anything which in any way incites violence as we become more and more concerned about the incidence of violence directed against women. I ask whether or not you will act to ensure that these cards are banned for distribution

in Ontario and that in fact they are withdrawn from Ontario stores.

Hon Ms Churley: Let me make it clear to the Leader of the Opposition that nobody in this House, including myself and this government, condones the availability and presence of these slasher films. We do not condone this kind of gratuitous, horrifying violence that we are being subjected to these days.

I have been doing everything within my power, within the jurisdiction of the Theatres Act in the provincial government, to limit what's available to the public. I have said before that we are trying to work with the federal government to make sure it takes its responsibility seriously and changes the Criminal Code so that we have more power within the provincial Legislature to do something about these kinds of materials.

But I will commit to the House today, believe me, that I will take any steps that I possibly can within the realm of my jurisdiction to stop these kinds of cards from entering into the province of Ontario. I'll continue to work with the federal government, and I'd be happy to work with any member in this House and do what we can within our power, within our jurisdiction, to stop these cards from entering Ontario.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): My question is to the minister in charge of auto insurance. In Friday's Hamilton Spectator, you stated that if the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives hadn't stalled the bill in 1992—meaning Bill 164—"we would have been able to have clearly, from the point of view of the public, implemented that package without any cost increases."

Given the wide number of studies that have been performed, in fact performed by your government, by other actuaries, how do you justify this ridiculous statement, particularly in light of the fact that the bill was given first reading on December 5, 1991, and you didn't call it till September 30, 1992?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): The member for Willowdale likes to have fun with his selective memory. The member will recall last summer discussions that I had with him in his very own office when we were attempting before this House adjourned to get second reading done on Bill 164. Unfortunately, the opposition ensured that didn't happen last summer.

That's first of all exactly what the complaint was about, but secondly, let's deal with the first part of his preamble, where he raised the question of what the actuarial studies showed. The actuarial studies showed a number of things. That includes not only the government's actuarial studies but the actuarial studies that were done by the insurance industry as well.

The actuarial studies that were done by the insurance

industry showed that OMPP was substantially overpriced. In fact, the member will recall that in the fall of 1991, the insurance industry voluntarily rolled back rates at our direction because the product was overpriced. There is no question in anybody's study that if in 1991 or in June 1992 we had passed Bill 164 and implemented it, we could have implemented it without any cost to the consumer.

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Mr Harnick: If your bill couldn't withstand debate in the Legislature and that caused costs to go up, merely debating your bill, I'd hate to see what's going to happen when your bill hits the marketplace.

I'm a little bit perturbed about the fact that every time you get up to answer a question about rates, you talk about the Liberal bill and the costs that were associated with the Liberal bill, 6%, 7%, 8% rollbacks in somebody's direction. The fact of the matter is that people are saying, and people of good authority, people who have done actuarial studies, are saying that your bill is going to cost consumers up to 17% or maybe more in increased premiums, and that includes Floyd Laughren's tax increase that is rolled into that which you didn't even know about.

The concern that I have, without blaming it on the Liberal bill being 7% more or 8% more, is that with a 17% raise in rates, people aren't going to be able to afford to drive their cars, and if they do drive their cars, they're going to drive their cars without insurance, and that's not going to benefit anybody.

What I'd like to know from you is, if the insurance rates go up by 17%—I probably should say “when they go up 17%,” but I want to be fair to you—what are you going to do?

Hon Mr Charlton: Two things I have to take out of the member's question and respond to as clearly as I possibly can. Firstly, the member on the one hand refers to 17%, which has appeared in a couple of press stories, and then says, “Don't talk to me about the 7% or 8% that's associated with the current legislation, the Liberal legislation.” Unfortunately, if the member reads those press stories carefully, the 17% includes 8% associated with the current legislation. So I can't leave that out of my response.

Secondly, rates are not going to go up by 17%. I have said consistently throughout, ever since December 1991 when I introduced Bill 164, that I believed the insurance industry at the end of the day would act responsibly. They did in the fall of 1991, at my urging, and rolled back rates by 5%. I believe the insurance industry, under Bill 164, will do the same thing, but I have said consistently from the outset that if the insurance industry behaves irresponsibly, I will deal with that by regulation.

Mr Harnick: The concern I have is if rates go up

17%, there's an assumption that you're making that it's because insurance companies are behaving irresponsibly. If they are or if that's your assumption and you're incorrect, they could be going broke.

When I look at Bill 164, your bill increases accident benefits by up to \$400 a week. Weekly accident benefits go up \$400 a week. Your bill increases medical expense limits on every policy by perhaps up to \$500,000. Only a fool could look at that and say, “Prices can't go up,” because you're increasing the benefits. How can't prices go up? Then in the same breath, you're saying to us, “Oh, don't worry, prices aren't going up.” How can you make these statements with any credibility?

Hon Mr Charlton: I'm extremely glad to hear that the member for Willowdale has now publicly got up and said that this bill increases benefits for injured drivers in this province, because there was a day not too long ago in debate on this bill when the member for Willowdale stood with the member for Welland-Thorold and said, “This takes benefits away from people.” But he's now right. There are significant benefit increases in this package of changes to the auto insurance legislation.

At the end of the day, the simple bottom line is that Bill 164 has to be taken and understood in conjunction with the other consequent changes that are part of this bill, changes which the member knows full well about, changes like the regulations we'll put in place to regulate the delivery of rehabilitation and long-term care, both very costly items for the insurance industry, which up until now, under the current legislation, have gone totally unregulated.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): My question's to the Premier. Your government offered the health care sector a \$50-million signing bonus, or bribe, in essence, a \$50-million bribe per year, built into the base for the three-year package of your social contract. That bribe accounts for \$150 million over the next three years.

Now, if the whole plan of the social contract was to reduce compensation, reduce the costs of government, how then can you explain to me and to the constituents of the province of Ontario where this \$150-million bribe is coming from and who's going to pay for it?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I'll refer this to the Deputy Premier.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): I appreciate the question, because it allows me to clear up some misinformation that appeared in some of the tabloids today.

The total health care sector, as I recall, was at almost \$500 million, \$470 million, in the entire health care sector for the social contract public compensation savings.

The health care sector is unique. As a matter of fact, each one of the eight major sectors that was designated under the social contract legislation is indeed unique, and as a matter of fact, as a result of the fact that the sector is unique, the agreements are unique as well.

The amount of money that was put into the health care sector was not either a signing bonus—it certainly, to use the term of the member for Etobicoke West, which I find very unfortunate, and I'm sure he'd want to reconsider it, but to refer to it as a bribe really is terribly unfortunate and I'm sure that on sober second thought, when he's had a chance to breathe deeply, he'll reconsider that expression. It was simply money that will go into a social contract structural equalization fund and had absolutely nothing to do with being a signing bonus to allow us to establish an agreement in the health care sector.

Mr Stockwell: Well, that was the question. I understand it's a structural equalization fund, as you would call it. Others have referred to it as a bribe; others have referred to it as a signing bonus. But the fact of the matter remains, you didn't answer the question. We all know you called it a social contract structural equalization fund. But the question still stands: \$50 million a year over three years is \$150 million. Where are you getting this money from? You didn't answer that, which was the very point of the question.

Secondly—and I've got a copy of the contract here—also included in the deal to the health care sector is an agreement to allow workers to collect wage increases under the grid system, which they commonly refer to it as. In other words, at a time of restraint, at a time when the public sector wages, sir, have to be cut, you are allowing health care workers to increase their individual salaries as yet another bribe to reach a deal.

You can be sure, Mr Treasurer, that if the health care workers agree to this, the teachers will do with nothing less. If the health care workers get it—they get the grid system increase, the merit raise, every year—the teachers are going to want it.

Mr Treasurer, can you tell me how much these expected bribes are going to cost? We talked to the Ontario Hospital Association today. They suggest the grid system increase is going to cost them \$53 million a year. You've included \$50 million as a bribe to get them to sign. That's \$150 million plus \$159 million. Over three years, that's a new \$309 million you've included that they've got to find cuts for, and they can't even find the original 5%.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Stockwell: Where is this money coming from? Because according to sources in your ministry quoted in the *Globe and Mail*, they suggest they're going to run up the deficit. So what was the point of the exercise if

you're going to bang an additional \$300 million on to the debt?

Hon Mr Laughren: The member for Etobicoke West, in response to my answer, in his first supplementary said it's other people who are calling it a bribe and then proceeds to call it a bribe two or three times more in the second question. Either you're calling it a bribe or you're not calling it a bribe.

Mr Stockwell: I am.

Hon Mr Laughren: You are calling it a bribe. All right then, as long as we can see that that's on the record.

Is he also saying, I would ask him, that Mr Timbrell called it a bribe? Is that what he's implying in his question as well? Because I can tell you, Mr Speaker, that the \$2-billion saving under the social contract is still the target that we intend to achieve. The fact is that you may find this hard to understand, and certainly the Liberals will never understand it, but we have not ended our attempts to find further savings in the health care sector, and that's where the money will come from.

1430

Mr Stockwell: What an absolute joke that answer is. You've asked them to save 5%. On the wage freeze they've got 1% and that's it. Now you're saying you've got to get an additional 4% of the 5% plus 300 million new dollars. They haven't saved your first 5% yet, and you're burdening them with another \$300 million. The OHA would be crazy to sign this. If you want to save \$300 million right away just tear this up, because all your negotiations have done is cost the taxpayers money.

Your bag of goodies has been estimated to cost over \$300 million to the health care sector, this cost that was designed to reduce the cost of government and the cost to the payroll. It doesn't make any sense to offer signing bonuses and wage increases as part of the system.

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): Remember when Dennis Timbrell said 14,000 people were going to be laid off?

Mr Stockwell: I hear the economic minister piping up. The fact is that you're going to allow grid increases, in essence, merit increases. You're going to give them a \$50-million signing bonus—

The Speaker: Would the member place a question, please?

Mr Stockwell: —built into the base every year for three years. You're going to cost this health sector \$300 million. They haven't found more than 1% of the original 5%. My question to the Treasurer is, where are you going to find this additional money, considering the fact that the health care sector has already said: "We can't even meet your original targets. How are we going to find an additional \$300 million?" Where are you

going to get it?

Hon Mr Laughren: I guess there are doubting Thomases everywhere. I can recall when this government indicated that the growth in health care spending that was run up by the Tories and the Liberals in the 1980s was unsustainable, they scoffed and said, "You won't be able to do anything about it." Guess what? We did something about. We've reduced the growth in health care spending to 1% and, as well, we've cut the growth in drug benefit spending by half.

I would say to the member for Etobicoke West that what he doesn't understand is that the sectoral agreements are arrived at by negotiations with the parties involved, and I remind him that the employees in the health care sector are prepared to sign this agreement.

If the member for Etobicoke West thinks that somehow by achieving 5% savings in the health care sector is a basket of goodies, I wish he'd translate that to other people out there in the province, because other people believe we are dealing with this problem in a very serious way and we are going to achieve these savings.

The member for Etobicoke West can call me crazy or stupid or whatever he wants, the point is that he didn't believe this government could achieve the savings it has shown that it can.

The Speaker: New question. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Again to the Premier, I was dismayed to see a full-page ad, paid for presumably by the taxpayers of the province, extolling the virtue of the government's social contract scheme in newspapers across the province this weekend, another \$84,000 attempt to put a gloss on this government's disastrous policy and a process that is breaking down even as we speak.

Even worse than that for me was the fact that this ad was full of what I can at best call half-truths. It is a half-truth to say you're negotiating with workers and employers, because it is not negotiation when you're prepared to sign deals with whomever you can entice to come to the table. It is a half-truth to say, as this ad says, you're going to bring in wage freezes as a last resort when everybody you are negotiating with or to knows very well that you are rolling back wages.

But what is not talked about in the ads at all is what these deals are going to cost this province in the future. I ask the Premier, are your negotiators instructed to cost all financial liabilities for future budgets when they reach these subagreements and have you calculated all the financial liabilities of your fail-safe provisions if in fact no agreements are actually reached? If so, will you make these calculations public?

Hon Mr Rae: I find it ironic that the member for Etobicoke West, who just finished his tirade, accused the government of bribing everybody and in fact not

effecting any savings, and the Leader of the Opposition now talks about the fact that we're simply rolling back everyone's wages.

The facts of the matter are that we are negotiating. We are negotiating and we've indicated that we can't negotiate in a vacuum and that on August 1, if there are no agreements in a sector, obviously certain things will happen as a result of that. As much as we regret that reality, it is the case that we can't continue to negotiate in a complete vacuum. We've been negotiating since April.

I guess the clearest answer that I can give to the honourable member is obviously, on conclusion, it would seem to me that what the member is entitled to and what the act in fact provides for is that the Minister of Finance will make regular financial reporting to the House with respect to the agreements and to the costs and savings of those agreements.

So my short answer to the honourable member would be, yes, we will provide a full accounting to the House. My judgement would be that we can only do that after August 1 in terms of the first accounting, but that I would fully anticipate that's what the Minister of Finance will do.

Mrs McLeod: I would say to the Premier that the concern of the member for Etobicoke West is reflective of concerns that we have and it is not inconsistent with the concern I express today. Both concerns are real. Your negotiations are a sham. They are not achieving the cost saving that you're looking for in this budget year.

Even beyond that, this government, through this social contract process as well as a host of other initiatives, is piling up cost after cost after cost for future governments, both municipal and provincial, and that is what I am trying to get at today. I am truly concerned about the effect that your last-minute deals are going to have on future deficits, and the financial incentives that are being put on the table are only part of that concern. Let me mention three others.

There are confused messages being given out about how these agreements are going to affect pension plans, even as you have already recalculated the government's contributions to use \$500 million to be able to set up redeployment plans and offer the financial incentives that you've put on the table, and you have already deferred \$500 million in pension payments. You are negotiating days off without calculating overtime costs. Thirdly, you are requiring deferred pay to be made up in the future, with no calculation at all of future liability for governments. I say to you that this is not deficit control, whatever your newspaper ad says, and you cannot use newspaper ads to cloak what is financial irresponsibility.

Premier, the public of this province have a right to

know what this set of deals is going to cost them, and I ask today whether you will agree to bring in the Provincial Auditor to assess the future liabilities of all provisions of negotiated agreements and of your fail-safe provisions before any implementation begins. Will you call in the Provincial Auditor to do this analysis and will you make his findings public?

Hon Mr Rae: What I find ironic is that the member, whose party did not move any amendments during the course of the discussion, would now be coming forward with a very specific proposal. I would say to her very directly that I've already undertaken, the Minister of Finance has undertaken, to give the kind of accounting to the House which is required.

I can assure the honourable member that when we took office and had to deal with the ongoing and increased costs of programs which were brought in by the former administration, we developed a very keen awareness of this issue of long-term liabilities and long-term problems and long-term costs and the impacts they have.

The purpose of the social contract negotiations is to save money. It cannot be separated out from the long-term fiscal context of the province. There are going to be no huge revenue increases down the pike which will produce enormous windfalls to government. We do not see that as being a prospect of the financial plans of the province.

So I can say to the honourable member: Cost reduction is the name of the game. The idea that we would delay the implementation of cost reduction in order to deal with a proposal which, if the Liberal Party was sincerely interested, they would have brought in in the course of the debate on Bill 48 is not something that we intend to do.

We intend to proceed with the savings, we intend to proceed with negotiations and we intend to proceed on a course which we believe is in the long-term interests of the province and will result in long-term savings to the people, the taxpayers, and to the future economy of the province of Ontario.

1440

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): I have a question for the Minister of Health regarding her Bill 101, long-term health care reform.

Minister, you know that the cornerstone of that legislation was to inject at the outset \$150 million of increased copayments from seniors all across Ontario and that those have resulted in semiprivate accommodation going to over \$1,400 a month and private accommodation going to over almost \$1,750 per month. Because there was such short notice, there has been chaos in many institutions across Ontario, because they're just now finding out the size of these increases.

There's a specific concern that I raised when these bills were before the House. It has to do with the fact that women and men who are married do not have their combined incomes calculated and that men have, on average, better pension plans—veteran or employment—and Canada assistance, and women are quite vulnerable. This has created a serious problem for women who are trying to remain independent in their homes when really most of the family income is being calculated for this accommodation issue.

My question, Minister: Will your government respond to the calls of our caucus and have an immediate review of this issue, since 71% of the elderly poor are women and they are more at risk here with the affordability of being able to stay in their homes and live independently while their husbands are in an institution where most of their income is being captured for accommodation?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I think I would have to be very sure that the figures and the ratios that the member refers to are in fact the actual ones, based on the experience of people who are in long-term care institutions.

But let me point out to him that the change in the per diem rates that resulted from Bill 101 had a very real effect of making the whole situation a great deal fairer right across the province. While there were undoubtedly some people, because the rates had varied from \$26 a day to almost \$90 a day in some institutions, whose accommodation rates were increased, there were over 10,000 whose rates in fact went down, in order to make sure that everybody was paying the same rate for the same kind of service.

I would also point out to him that another factor in the formula that was used, that I think brings some relief to the people he's talking about who might feel jeopardized in being able to retain their independence outside an institution, was the change in the calculation of income to being merely income, not assets, because certainly there were a number of people who were frightened that because one spouse was in a nursing home, the other would have to sell their assets and the home that they had both worked for in order to pay the cost of the nursing home. That is not now a factor because of the new formula.

Mr Jackson: Madam Minister, you're badly misinformed, because if you're in a semiprivate or private room, there is no calculation and you're forced to pay the high rate. You missed the whole point of my raising the question.

I raised this during public hearings and I didn't vote for this legislation for this reason. You were not the minister at the time, but when public hearings were occurring, your parliamentary assistant from Simcoe Centre and Mr Geoff Quirt responded to my question about the fact that, since there's no income testing for people in preferred accommodation, what regulations

were going to be put in place to ensure that homes for the aged didn't immediately begin converting affordable, basic ward accommodation into high-priced, luxury accommodation, which was a practice your party fought for 20 years when it happened to tenants in the private sector.

My question to you is this: We were assured during public hearings that no such conversion plans would be allowed. Yet I have before me a letter dated July 13 and I read directly from one sentence from Geoff Quirt, the same individual who assured me this would not happen, "In addition, the maximum percentage of beds in each facility for which preferred accommodation may be charged is raised from 45% to 60% of the mix of that building, effective July 1, 1993."

So my question is this: Aside from what's on the obvious face of it—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place his question, please.

Mr Jackson: —that you've had a change in policy, you are forcing seniors into preferred accommodation where they are not income tested, and women are more vulnerable who are left with less income. Please answer the question directly, because your government's policies are allowing for conversion.

The Speaker: Does the member have a question?

Mr Jackson: Will you review immediately this part of your regulation, not legislation, which empowers you to allow these residences to convert to a larger mix of luxury units, making access to affordable basic accommodation a real struggle for seniors in Ontario?

Hon Mrs Grier: Let me make it very clear that no resident will be discharged because of the new rates. The formula will look at the ability to pay, and the rates that are in place are maximums.

Mr Jackson: But they are stuck paying \$1,700.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mrs Grier: If in fact a home is raising the rates to the maximum, well, then I'm afraid the patient and the family have to make a decision as to whether—

Mr Jackson: It is \$20,000 a year.

The Speaker: The member for Burlington South, please come to order.

Hon Mrs Grier: —they can maintain a private room or need to have some other kind of accommodation. But let me assure the member that I am confident—

Mr Jackson: Answer the question. You are allowing luxury conversion. Why did Geoff Quirt lie at public hearings?

The Speaker: The member for Burlington South took a great deal of time to ask a serious question. I thought he would have listened for the reply.

New question.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr Norm Jamison (Norfolk): My question is to the Minister of Health. A health issue has recently come to my attention from one of my local unions in the area. The issue relates to the health policy of a local company and the return to work of employees.

Employees of Stelco Lake Erie works at Nanticoke reporting off work due to illness must go to the nearest hospital emergency room to obtain a physician's note in order to justify their absence should their own doctor not be available. I received a letter the other day about that from the local union and it goes on to say:

"I am forwarding this correspondence as a result of an existing Stelco policy regarding employee absenteeism. This policy currently requires employees reporting off work due to illness to go to the nearest hospital emergency room to obtain a physician's note in order to justify the absence should their own doctor not be available."

They go on to question whether or not this is an appropriate use of emergency room facilities.

Madam Minister, I'm very concerned about this practice. It shows an intent to arbitrarily have people use costly emergency services for purposes not intended. Obtaining a doctor's note to satisfy an absence concern at a workplace is obviously not an emergency.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the member have a question?

Mr Jamison: I believe this to be a grave misuse of emergency room facilities. I would like to know your position on this matter.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I would share the member's concern. Emergency rooms are for emergencies and I think it is incumbent upon all of us—employer, employees, health providers—as we struggle to both reform the system and contain its costs, to use the system responsibly. I would agree with the member that going to an emergency room for a note to justify that one is sick, to take to one's employer, is not an appropriate use of that service.

Mr Jamison: As I stated, Madam Minister, this is a policy that's put forward by the company in question, and it's come to my attention, after showing some concern over this, that this is not isolated to one company. I'd like to ask the minister, what measures, if any, have you or will you take to ensure that this abuse of emergency room facilities by employers is stopped?

Hon Mrs Grier: As the member is aware, third-party billings, which I think is what this would fall under, are in fact not now covered by OHIP, and I would think that the question between an employer and an employee as to who should bear the cost of that is something that—

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Now the worker has to pay. Now the worker has to pay his own.

The Speaker: Order, the member for St Catharines.

Hon Mrs Grier: —has to be negotiated and worked out between the employees and their employer, and I would suspect in the situation he refers to that this would be a subject for negotiations.

The Speaker: New question, the member for St Catharines.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Thank you. You were just early in asking for me. I knew that.

I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, though I would have liked to have asked it of the Premier, because he's really in charge of casinos. It's about casino gambling.

I was listening to the CBC 1 o'clock news today, one of my favourite programs, and it was reported at that time that 25 people from the business community in Windsor had been taken by one of the corporations that is bidding for the casino in Windsor on an all-expenses-paid trip to Gulfport, Mississippi. It's called Grand Casino Corp. The purpose of this, apparently, was to show the people how a casino works and hopefully get their endorsement of it.

Could the minister tell me whether her government believes it is proper for these corporations to be taking people on all-expenses-paid trips to these various casinos in order that they come back and endorse it for the people of Windsor and the people of Ontario?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): Obviously to arrange such a trip is not illegal, but just because it's not illegal doesn't mean that it's proper. The companies are quite welcome to tell the community as much about themselves as they can, but they should do that within reason.

I personally think the trip was excessive. That kind of behaviour quite frankly will be taken into account, I'm sure, by the deputy minister's team which is looking at and assessing the bids. They'll be looking at the integrity and the business ethics and their ability to work cooperatively with the province.

1450

Mr Bradley: Bill Gillies of your ministry, the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, was quoted as saying he doesn't believe that all-expenses-paid trips are helpful to the process. Would the minister assure the House that she will insist that no further trips take place, that no further people be taken to various casinos around the United States and elsewhere in order that they can be so-called convinced of the virtue of these casinos? Would she reveal whether the remarks she just made in the House mean that in fact those who've already done so will have their applications looked upon with disfavour?

Hon Ms Churley: I made it clear that I don't condone this activity and I have asked the project team

to make this clear in writing for any future plans that the bidders may have in mind. I've asked to have it put in writing to ask companies, if they have any future plans, to let the community know about who they are, to let us know that they are and to check with the project team. We'll tell them our views on this. That's the very best we can do. We've made it clear that we don't condone this. It is not against the law, but as Bill Gillies said, it is not helpful. We will be making that very clear to the bidders.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): My question is to the Minister of Finance, back on the social contract. At the municipal level, a concern has been raised by the Ontario Urban Transit Association concerning transit services for municipalities, in that there is no coordination among the various ministries of the province of Ontario with regard to imposing cuts on the municipalities through the social contract.

Let me give you an example: The social contract for the Toronto Transit Commission will require a cut of some \$22 million, but as you're aware, the funding for transit is cost-shared through the province of Ontario—the Ministry of Transportation—the regional government and the users of the system. The Ministry of Transportation is demanding its share of the social contract cut, its share on top, piggybacking on the social contract program. It's 16% of \$22 million, which in this case is \$3.5 million of additional cuts that have been required.

Minister, my question to you is, will you ensure that there is no double reduction to the transit authorities in the province of Ontario?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I must confess I'm not sure I followed the entire complexity of the member's question. That's not his fault, I would say. But I would simply say to him that I hope he's not opposed to the fact that the municipalities must play their share in our expenditure reduction exercise in the province when it comes to public sector compensation.

Secondly, when we engaged in the expenditure control plan earlier this year, prior to the introduction of the social contract, the municipalities also had to play a role there through the unconditional grants.

I hope the member opposite is not parting company with his other Conservative colleagues and suggesting that there shouldn't be a contribution on the part of the municipalities.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): He didn't understand the question, Dave.

Hon Mr Laughren: I acknowledge the fact that I perhaps did not understand the question.

Mr David Johnson: Let me try again. Back to the minister, no, I'm not parting company. We understand that spending cuts are necessary. We understand that all

sectors, including the municipal sector, have to bear their fair share.

The problem here, though, is that because of the formula, there are two cuts that are being made, not just the social program cut but a further cut from the Ministry of Transportation, in this case an extra \$3.5 million that is a cut solely because of the social contract, for no other reason. So the Toronto Transit Commission and the 68 other municipalities across the province of Ontario are seeing two cuts: one direct cut and one indirect cut through the Ministry of Transportation. They are asking at the social contract table why they should have to bear two cuts. One cut would be fair, but two cuts are not fair.

I might say that because of the pause day program, they are also going to see a loss of revenue. In the case of the Toronto Transit Commission, they're estimating they're going to lose three million riders in 1994 and a further loss in revenue, which even poses the question—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member conclude his question, please.

Mr David Johnson: It makes it more important that they not have two cuts, an indirect cut and a direct cut.

Hon Mr Laughren: I'm glad the member clarified it in his supplementary, because I'm convinced now that I did understand his first question.

The reason there are two impacts or hits on the municipal sector is because of what I said before, that there was an expenditure control plan that clicked in and affected the unconditional grants and affected GO Transit. Secondly, the social contract of course impacts on the entire public sector.

Mr David Johnson: You still don't understand.

Hon Mr Laughren: If I'm still not connecting with the member, I'd be happy to have a private chat with him and see if he can straighten me out.

FUEL SUBSTITUTION

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): My question is for the Minister of Housing. Madam Minister, two weeks ago I was in my riding in Port Perry to make an announcement of funding of \$400,000 for a transfer from electrical heating to gas heating for 26 co-op housing units. I can tell you that the seniors there were absolutely ecstatic about saving the money on their heat. They couldn't say enough.

My question is, there was some discussion about the number of jobs this project created. What's the rationale? I said one figure and I want to make sure I got it right.

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): The job creation estimates we provide for a program of this nature really are provided on the basis of the expenditures involved. The overall expenditure for the social housing energy retrofit program over two years will be \$28 million. Therefore, we do our calculation and we

say we're going to create the equivalent of full-year jobs for 1,100 people. Some members of the opposition queried that when I suggested we are now doing work on more units. Seven thousand had been the original estimate; now it's 23,000. They queried the job estimates, but that's basically done on an expenditure base.

We're changing the nature of the work we're doing. It's not merely conversion from electricity to gas but also a lot of tightening up, insulation work, use, where we can, of such features as solar passive power, and also putting in some water conservation measures.

Mr Mills: Thank you for that explanation.

As I stood outside, the newspaper reporters said to me: "You know, this is a wonderful program for the seniors in this building, but what's the reaction of Hydro to this? You're cutting them out of the business." Are we undermining Hydro, Madam Minister?

Hon Ms Gigantes: Nobody wants to undermine Hydro, and this program is certainly not going to do it. The problems that Hydro has it recognizes as being ones of overuse of electricity for inappropriate purposes in in-home heating. It's turned out to be a very expensive proposition, which of course was sold to the Ontario public in earlier days under different governments, and there's a very high price to be paid for it.

We stopped putting electric heating in social housing in Ontario in the spring of 1991, and we think this will contribute to energy conservation in the future in Ontario.

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PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

Signed by 477 constituents of the Brant-Haldimand and Brantford ridings, and I affix my signature.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I have a

petition presented to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor, Legislative Assembly of Ontario, from the people of Ontario. They're from Etobicoke, Scarborough, various parts of Metropolitan Toronto. It says:

"That free and open collective bargaining for public service employees be restored and be returned to its honourable position in Ontario," something this government used to believe in;

"That the social contract in its present form be destroyed"—not just revoked; they want it destroyed—"and that the valuable programs and services in the public sector be maintained for the betterment of all Ontarians," something that this government used to also believe in;

"That the government withdraw Bill 48," and this is the key point here, "and, in place of this bill, the government work cooperatively with the public service unions to find an equitable solution rather than eliminating valuable public services," something that would form the cornerstone of this party's platform in opposition.

I myself have not signed this, but I will, and enter it for all the good people of Metropolitan Toronto and Etobicoke to register their sincere discomfort with this government.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I have a petition here which I'm presenting to the Legislature on behalf of the member for Beaches-Woodbine, who, being a minister, is unable to do so herself. It is a petition in regard to delivery of psychotherapy, and it reads:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on the access to and delivery of psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will enable the government to unilaterally and arbitrarily restrict payments for psychotherapy," particularly those offered, I guess, by physicians, psychiatrists;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"The government of Ontario must move immediately to withdraw the proposal to restrict payments for psychotherapy."

It doesn't mention the social work act, although of course it should if we're talking about access to psychotherapy in this province.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I'm pleased to present a petition signed by hundreds of people living in and about the county of Renfrew, in which petitioners express their grave concern about the elimination of

Sunday as a day of rest.

DRUG BENEFITS

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have a petition here that has been signed by numerous pharmacists in the Kitchener-Waterloo community, and it reads as follows regarding Bill 29:

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the introduction of Bill 29 makes substantial changes to the Ontario drug benefit program that would allow the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make unilateral and significant changes to the Ontario Drug Benefit Act through regulation and without consultation with seniors nor negotiation with pharmacists;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly to adopt the amendments to Bill 29 as proposed by the Ontario Pharmacists' Association which is affixed to this petition."

This petition has been sent to me by Sherry Peister, and I hereby affix my signature as well.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): I have a petition here signed by several hundred people in southwestern Ontario, and it's to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

PUBLIC SERVICES

Mr Frank Mclash (Kenora): I have a petition to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Red Lake, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We, the undersigned, call on the Ontario government to maintain and improve our public services. Public services are vital to our communities and our way of life. We can't afford to lose them."

HEALTH CARE

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have a petition to the

Legislative Assembly of Ontario. I must say, we receive many of these each day in my offices.

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): I have a petition from the Committee of Concerned Citizens Against Bill 38 in my riding of York East:

"We, the citizens of Ontario, the constituents of your riding, wish to express, by way of the attached petition, our serious concerns about the proposed amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act, called Bill 38. It proposes to delete 51 Sundays each year from the list of legal holidays and substitute a single Sunday, Easter Sunday, in its place as the only remaining legal Sunday holiday.

"We are aware the number of signatures contained in this petition which is now being presented is due to the extraordinarily long delay in the provincial Legislature's consideration of Bill 38.

"We remind you that the current government was elected on the promise to keep Sunday a common pause day or a holiday and to continue to restrict Sunday store openings.

"Please be assured that we, as citizens of Ontario, will be watching with interest how you, as the representative of the people in our riding, will cast your vote on this critical issue.

"Our vote will be for the retention of Sunday as a legal holiday 52 weeks out of the year.

"We strongly urge you to support your constituents in their logical choice in favour of retaining Sunday's current status as a legal holiday all year round by voting against Bill 38."

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MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition signed by many constituents addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's

expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will enable government to unilaterally and arbitrarily restrict payments for psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality mental health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw the proposal to restrict payments for psychotherapy and withdraw the proposal to allow the cabinet to make decisions with respect to the number of times patients may receive particular insured services and set maximums with respect thereto.

"The government of Ontario must reaffirm its commitment to the process of joint management and rational reform of the delivery of medical services in the province as specified under the Ontario Medical Association/government framework agreement."

I agree with this petition and have affixed my signature.

NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Constituents from my riding of Oakville South and the surrounding areas have asked me to table a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in 1923, seven Ontario bands signed the Williams Treaty, which guaranteed that native peoples would fish and hunt according to provincial and federal conservation laws, like everyone else; and

"Whereas the bands were paid the 1993 equivalent of \$20 million; and

"Whereas that treaty was upheld by Ontario's highest court last year; and

"Whereas Bob Rae is not enforcing existing laws which prohibit native peoples from hunting and fishing out of season; and

"Whereas this will put at risk an already pressured part of Ontario's natural environment;

"We, the undersigned, adamantly demand that the government honour the principles of fish and wildlife conservation, to respect our native and non-native ancestors and to respect the Williams Treaty."

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I've got a petition here like the many petitions we've heard read over the last period of time on casinos, and I'll just read it.

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

There is a covering letter from a minister of the United Church of Canada who said that this petition only had a brief mention at two church services last Sunday, in Knox church in Sutton and the United Church in Virginia, and that all kinds of people signed this and went out of their way to sign this. I affix my signature to it.

ABORTION

Mr John Sola (Mississauga East): I have a petition from a number of Ontario residents expressing opposition to the government's intention to implement the recommendations of the task group of abortion service providers.

Since it is a very long petition, I will refrain from reading it, but I will add that, to express my support for this petition, I will add my signature.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

It's signed by 32 parishioners of the Scotland Pastoral Charge of the United Church of Canada, and I affix my signature.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have a petition that's been sent to me by the Hepworth Zion Amabel Church, and it's a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of

society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I have affixed my signature.

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): I've finally finished counting all these petitions. There are 3,368, which say the following:

"We, the undersigned, as citizens of Niagara Falls, appeal to our provincial government and its elected representatives to designate Niagara Falls, Ontario, for a casino operation.

"Each year, over 12 million people regularly visit our fine city. Of these 12 million visitors, it is estimated that over 70% of our visitors stay for only one day. We feel that one government-regulated casino would be an excellent attraction to retain our tourists for a longer period. Increasing the percentage of overnight tourists would have a significant positive effect on our economy in Niagara Falls and the region, which would also contribute to the provincial government's increased revenue requirements.

"In summary, we believe that one regulated gambling casino will provide much-needed employment, increase tourism for our existing hospitality industry, provide an immediate and lasting improvement for our local economy and provide much-needed revenue for the provincial government.

"We therefore strongly urge you to support the establishment of one government-regulated casino in Niagara Falls."

ORDERS OF THE DAY

INSURANCE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LES LOIS CONCERNANT LES ASSURANCES

Mr Charlton moved third reading of Bill 164, An Act to amend the Insurance Act and certain other Acts in respect of Automobile Insurance and other Insurance

Matters / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les assurances et certaines autres lois en ce qui concerne l'assurance-automobile et d'autres questions d'assurance.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Does the honourable minister have any comments to make?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet and Government House Leader): Just before I start, it's my understanding that we have an agreement that I will take 15 minutes on my remarks now and five minutes to close at the end and that the opposition parties will split the remainder of the time equally and, although I'll leave it to them to inform you, that one of the members of our caucus may use a small portion of that time at their discretion.

The Acting Speaker: Is there unanimous agreement? Agreed.

Hon Mr Charlton: It's a privilege and a pleasure to begin the debate on third reading of Bill 164. When I introduced this legislation, I emphasized that it was designed with three basic objectives in mind: to ensure fairness in the operation of the automobile insurance system in this province, to improve the schedule of benefits available to accident victims and to deliver those reforms in an affordable package.

You'll notice, Mr Speaker, that all three of the aspects I've set out here have been a very prominent part of the debate around this bill since the beginning, some focusing exclusively on the cost questions, others focusing exclusively on the benefits-that-are-delivered-to-people questions and some others focusing on the question of fairness and accessibility. They have all become a very important part of the debate around this bill, although often those that focus on one tend to forget the others.

These objectives were established to address the very real and damaging inequities which exist in the current Ontario motorist protection plan introduced by the Liberal government in 1990. The government was determined to respond to the stream of very serious complaints it was receiving about the failures of the OMPP system. We have done so with a reform package that addresses not only the needs of accident victims but also the question of achieving stability in the setting of premium rates, which of course is a concern shared by consumers, the insurance industry and the government.

1520

This legislation is a product of extensive and lengthy consultation over a considerable period of time and reflects a balanced approach to reform of the province's automobile insurance system. The Liberal OMPP scheme simply ignores the insurance needs of many people. Accident benefits are inadequate for the long-term disabled and often fail to meet income replacement needs. There is no recognition of accident victims with special circumstances, like those who are unemployed,

students, care givers or small business owners in the current system. Benefits are not indexed. As a result, people with long-term injuries see month-by-month erosion of compensation that often was inadequate to begin with. But even if it is adequate today, 20 years down the road, in an unindexed form, it becomes totally inadequate.

The existing caps on rehabilitation in long-term care mean that permanently disabled people may not get the support they need, both in terms of their ability to recover to some extent and in terms of their ability to live in some dignity over the rest of their lives. Monthly limits on attendant care create pressure to institutionalize victims who need greater support. In addition, the restricted access to courts means that many seriously injured innocent accident victims cannot claim for pain and suffering losses. In fact, only catastrophic injuries qualify. No psychological damage, no matter how devastating, is recognized at all.

Alongside these limitations and inequities in the OMPP, the system does nothing to provide stability in the setting of premium rates. The caps on attendant and long-term care have proven to be both ineffective and an inefficient means of cost control. Without standards that provide for the needs of the disabled while at the same time ensuring industry-wide guidelines for care, there is no predictability in the system and therefore there is also no rate stability. Bill 164 changes all of this.

The new insurance plan combines the best features of structured automatic accident benefits with court-assessed compensation. It's a unique model that draws on the best of both systems. The improved benefits schedule is the most generous and equitable in Canada and it eliminates the need to sue a third party for economic losses. Liability through the court system will be reserved for those non-economic losses that courts are best able to evaluate.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): It eliminates the right to sue. What do you mean, the need? You don't have the right to sue for economic loss. It has nothing to do with need. You take away the pure right to sue.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Charlton: I am convinced we have achieved the best possible reform package, one that is innovative and comprehensive and that reconciles the various concerns brought forward by the insurance industry, consumer groups, advocates for accident victims and rehabilitation specialists and others.

Mr Elston: Where is your social democrat background?

Hon Mr Charlton: The member across the way obviously has some guilt that he feels about the package which he imposed on the people of Ontario. Now we have to proceed to fix the difficulties created in that

package. I'm proud of the consultation process that has been so fundamental to the future in crafting this legislation which I think will be fair, accessible and affordable for the people of this province in the long-term future.

Perhaps the best illustration of the success of a cooperative approach can be found in the report of the Task Force on Rehabilitation and Long-Term Care Benefits. The unanimous set of recommendations was produced by a group of people representing all stakeholders in the reform process. They have provided government with an essential reference point for positive regulatory reform and, in so doing, demonstrated how cooperation can benefit everyone associated with the problem.

Among the many recommendations from the task force which the government views as extremely helpful are those concerning the raising of caps on monthly attendant care, from \$3,000 to \$10,000, and on lifetime supplementary medical and rehabilitation benefits, from \$500,000 to \$1 million.

The report also proposes a comprehensive framework to clarify the responsibilities and obligations of insurers, injured persons and professionals. In doing so, the members of the task force provided a further concrete expression of the objectives of Bill 164, namely, to ensure that the needs of accident victims are met while at the same time establishing standards for care to provide a consistent measure of predictability in the setting of premium rates.

As part of the consultation process, the government also received a wide range of submissions during public hearings which were held in several communities across the province following second reading. As an indication of the value of the submissions and the willingness of the government to adopt positive ideas to make the legislation stronger, we produced a number of amendments that were tabled during clause-by-clause reading.

One of the most significant of these was a change to the provisions for court access in which we moved a proposed \$15,000 deductible to an amended approach where a \$10,000 deductible, in combination with a verbal threshold, will apply. This was after serious and significant consultation with two of the extremes in the debate, the insurance industry on the one end and the legal community on the other end of that spectrum. This change was generated by the evidence presented particularly by lawyers, advocacy groups and the Insurance Bureau of Canada, which persuaded me that in the interests of achieving the maximum amount of fairness in the new system, this would be the best approach and in fact in some respects applies a lesser test to people's ability to gain access to compensation for pain and suffering.

Another important amendment called for by many witnesses is a provision for the mandatory offering of

insurance coverage for excess economic loss on an optional basis to consumers. The government was persuaded of the benefits in requiring the availability of choice for consumers, with the marketplace providing the ultimate test of the viability for such options. As I said, we will force the companies in a mandatory way to offer those options, but they will be optional for the public if they wish to pursue that kind of additional coverage.

Let me say just a few words here about the contentious issue of premium rates in this debate.

Those who have followed the debate around this legislation will know that at various times there have been alarms sounded about its impact on premiums. I have always maintained that many of the public comments were an exaggeration of the real cost of implementing our reforms, reforms that were designed not only to help accident victims but also to be affordable to consumers.

During question period just today, we saw questions raised about media stories over the last three days talking about 17% increases resulting from this legislation, Mr Speaker, and I want to tell you so that you and my colleagues here in the Legislature clearly understand what's going on here in the shift on the cost question, the premiums question, which has occurred, because the member for Willowdale in his question to me today referred to actuarial studies that have nothing to do with the newspaper stories of Friday and today.

The actuarial studies which the insurance industry produced some months ago did comparative studies of OMPP versus Bill 164 and predicted in one study cost differences as high as 25%. The insurance industry, as a result of the last six months, has now rejected totally the findings of all of those actuarial studies and the insurance industry is clearly and openly saying that the cost difference between Bill 164 and the OMPP system is about 6% or 7%. I still maintain, as I have said from the beginning, that the costs associated with the implementation of Bill 164 will be 3% to 4%. But that's an industry which predicted 25% and 30% increases, then brought them down to 20%, then advocated just a few short months ago that the increases would be 15% and is now down to 6% or 7%.

1530

In addition to that, we have to deal with what has become a real and now gradually more defined problem, the cost of OMPP itself. One of the things we're beginning to understand as a result of rate applications that are being made by a variety of insurance companies this spring—not because of Bill 164, but because of the existing system, the Liberal legislation—companies are having to go out and seek 7% and 8% and 9% rate increases because the Liberal system only did half the job. It dealt with some of the issues around very high court costs that evolved during the 1980s by moving to

a no-fault system except in catastrophic cases, but it didn't deal with putting in place the appropriate cost mechanisms in that system.

The work we've done around Bill 164 and the work we've done with the task force on rehab and long-term care, other initiatives that we're proceeding with, like graduated licensing and other road safety initiatives, are the things that start to come to terms with the unpredictable costs associated with the current system.

At the end of the day, taking this whole reform package together, we will not only have accomplished the goal I set out for you at the beginning of my comments, the goal of fairness, the goal of accessibility and affordability and stability in terms of prices, and the goal of extremely increased benefits to which accident victims in this province will have access and benefits which will be most important to those who most need them—those who are most severely injured in accidents, those who are the long-term disabled, who will now have access to indexed benefits; not only indexed benefits but the right to sue for pain and suffering and to gain substantial compensation through that mechanism and, as well, to be able to do that in the realm that we've talked about here today of a 3% or 4% premium increase—people who are unemployed, children, students and others will also have access to adequate benefits that they don't have access to under the current legislation.

It's been a long road with this piece of legislation, but it's one of which I am very proud, both of the work that was done by the staff in the auto insurance review as well as by all of those who participated in the consultation process: the insurance industry, the advocates for a variety of victims across the province, a number of consumers' groups and others who became part of the public hearing process. I thank them all for their contributions to this debate.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? The honourable member for Bruce.

Mr Elston: At the outset may I say that 10 minutes of the time I have will be relinquished to the member for Welland-Thorold so he can get some thoughts on the record. I can tell you, lest anyone misconstrue my generosity, I have no idea what he's going to say, bearing in mind his interesting remarks when I was minister. But in any event—

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Are we going to be having two-minute comments at the conclusion of each speech?

The Acting Speaker: No. When something like this has a time allocation in terms of splitting up the time between the various parties, we do away with the questions and comments.

Mr Harnick: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for

Bruce has the floor.

Mr Elston: In any event, I alerted you to the intervention of the member for Welland-Thorold.

What more can we say about auto insurance in this place? This long-term public policy issue was born out of real economic problems that were confronting people in the mid-1980s. Some of the members who are here—in fact probably one other member than myself who is here right now—recall the difficult economic times that came out of the early 1980s.

I was elected in 1981 and, as a new member, went through the times when interest rates were spiralling, when people in small business and farms were paying 15%, 18%, 22% for operating loans, when they were paying double-digit interest charges for their loans on real estate. Out of all that came a real sense of economic dislocation like there had never been, at least in my time, in the Legislative Assembly and certainly in my formative years when I was really taking note of some of these economic events.

Right along with that economic dislocation was the introduction in the mid-1980s of double-digit cost increases in auto insurance. There were a lot of reasons why this occurred and a number of them have been enumerated through successive reports and from testimony on the public record by various groups of people.

It's interesting to note that to a large extent, the real problem of auto insurance for most of us who have fortunately not been involved in personal injury accidents is the fact that when it comes time to pay the bill every year, or monthly if that's how you pay your bill, to renew your insurance every year, having not used your insurance to fix a car, to help pay for the cost of personal injury or otherwise, it's hard to understand why we paid 15% and 20% increases when you didn't seem to use your insurance.

It's that sense of having to pay for something that you don't get value for that had led in a lot of ways to a growing malaise in the public about auto insurance in the province of Ontario. Very little had been said before the mid-1980s, at least in my recollection, about auto insurance.

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): Do you like public auto insurance?

Mr Elston: No, I don't like public auto insurance, in answer to the member for Lake Nipigon.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Neither does he.

Mr Elston: Neither do the New Democrats, so we're even on that score.

I was merely trying to outline for some people how we got ourselves to this location. The dislocation because of the financial circumstances of business and private people in this province was such that they couldn't tolerate another double-digit increase in the

expenses of daily living.

Take a look at our fine province. It's a huge province, but it's a province that has been built on communication of one sort or another over all of its history. The people in the riding of Bruce can't go easily from one place to another without jumping in an automobile. We can wait for a bus—there are no rail passenger services up our way any more—or we can call a cab.

I'll tell you, it's expensive going from Walkerton to Tobermory by cab. It is impossible in fact to go to Tobermory by bus from Walkerton. We can go to London, we can go to Toronto by public transportation, licensed routes, but it takes a long time, so we drive. We drive trucks, we drive every imaginable sort of vehicle that gets us from one place to another for our everyday living.

We have got to carry auto insurance, because in the early going in the 1980s there was a piece of legislation passed that said, "Everyone who applies for a licence for their vehicle must show proof of insurance coverage on that vehicle." It was designed to make sure that if there were accidents, people were covered. It is a requirement that if we travel in an automobile, it be licensed.

When it came to the mid-1980s and the crises of financial dislocations were occurring and were causing real problems for people, a 15% or 20% increase in your yearly operating expenses, when you weren't making a profit or making any kind of a return on your investment, meant for most people very difficult times.

In addition to that, young people, particularly young males, were finding that they were getting really hard hit because they were in that dubious group of people who were insured in the province of Ontario who were seen to have the highest incidence of the most severe accidents and, as a result, were paying a premium at a level much beyond that of others.

If you were paying \$2,000 or \$3,000 or \$4,000 or \$5,000 in insurance premiums over a year as a young driver and you suddenly found that 20% was being tacked on to your premium by the insurance companies, you found it almost impossible to make ends meet. In fact you were ending up being unable to keep your job and keep yourself in finances to pay your way through life, which everybody had discovered was becoming quite difficult in those days.

1540

When the Conservatives left government, the Liberals came in and there was this new desire to try to deal with the economic dislocation in several areas. One of the areas that seemed to be most ripe for reform was seen to be the auto insurance problem. We could see that the dislocation was such that it wasn't just affecting the young people of the province, it wasn't just a very small, select group who were problem drivers, but it

affected every young driver no matter what the record was. It affected a number of other drivers as insurance companies moved to make sure that they could continue to compete in the market.

That problem was actually exacerbated as the interest rates of the mid-1980s started to decline later in the decade, because without some income on the retained earnings or income on the premiums that flowed through, there was less and less money available to distribute to the people who actually applied for insurance benefits.

As things got worse, the situation of higher increases became intolerable, and the Liberal government of the day moved to bring in some stability, the type of stability that was spoken about by the member for Hamilton Mountain in his opening remarks. But lest anybody be very surprised by all this, whenever any public organization gets involved in a marketplace issue like this, there cannot be any permanent stability of any great length—permanent of any great length, what a silly statement that is.

There cannot be any permanence in rate stability, because I'll tell you, Mr Speaker, the things that we did in the 1950s and 1960s with insurance programs are not the things that we do in the 1970s and the 1980s or indeed in the 1990s. In fact anybody who stands in his place and says that we will once and for all reform the insurance program of this province and that we will have the best and fairest and most long-lasting plan that is imaginable is of course bound to end up rewriting the history later on, because our society is moving and evolving in such a way that we can but barely keep pace with the changes that make real economic dislocation in the insurance business a reality of our time.

I was once the Health minister before I was involved in being Minister of Financial Institutions, and over the course of my watching for about the last decade or so the health industry and the health providers and the health researchers and all of those people who deal on a day-to-day basis with trauma and other circumstances in health, I can tell you that it's because of the efficiency of a system of which I am quite proud that we actually have caused ourselves some difficulties in respect to insurance coverage, particularly for auto insurance.

I remark from time to time to people who ask about my current health and all those sorts of things that the one thing that is distracting for me is what I see as being an erosion of the stability that was once the hallmark of our health system in this province. I languish from day to day under the headlines that show that more and more stress is being placed on one facility or another, that there is more danger of us losing research institutes, that more nurses are being laid off the floors of our hospitals, that fewer and fewer people are receiving the services in our community as a result

of one cause or another.

Not all the problems are associated with policies of the New Democratic Party government here in the province, not all associated with those of the Mulroney Conservatives and his successor in the federal House, but some of them are structural in nature, some of them are costs which have been largely unanticipated by us as well-meaning and publicly interested policy setters.

What does that mean? Basically, it means that as our health system has continued to improve, we have no way to go but up in terms of the consumption of money with respect to our health system. I remember going to a meeting of a group of trauma experts when I was at the Ministry of Health, and we were talking about the various issues which intervened in relation to saving lives of individuals who were in automobile accidents.

We invariably were talking about the development of specialized trauma units in hospitals in Toronto and other larger centres that could entertain or host the economic problems associated with intensive health interventions as a result of traumas in automobile accidents.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Pouliot: Yes, but I see two lawyers and a car salesman sitting together.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Bruce has the floor.

Mr Elston: If the Minister of Transportation would like to go and speak with his two lawyer friends and the automobile rental person, I wish he would do that outside while I go through what I think are relevant, maybe slightly interesting to some people, remarks on the auto insurance program.

Let me get back to my meeting with the trauma people, experts in the province. I was struck so often by remarks that came back to me from those people and they said, "Minister,"—just like today, they sometimes don't know your first name so they get to call you minister a lot—"if you want to have the cheapest system, if you want to make sure that you contain costs, don't do a single thing to improve any type of intervention with respect to dealing with trauma from automobile or indeed any other kind of accident, because if you are interested primarily in making sure that you have the least expensive system possible, let the people die." I don't suspect there is anyone here anywhere who would want that as public policy.

I have striven, as I think most have, to try and put together programs that respond to intervening to prevent death from trauma situations. As a result of the success of trauma teams throughout this province of Ontario, and probably borrowing from successes from other venues as well, we have very good intervention with respect to automobile accidents. We save people who would have died a long time ago, even a short time ago.

We now intervene and have people whose limbs would've been useless being rehabilitated to an extent that they can live very close to the best lives they could have had before the accident occurred.

But what is the result of that intervention, to use the lingo of some of the experts that I used to sit on panels with, that salvage of trauma victims? The result is that we pay more because we don't stop dealing with them when they're in the automobile accident. We take them into the trauma centres, we take them into the intensive care units, we take them from there into the hospital beds, we take them to the rehab centres, and we take them to physiotherapy and occupational therapy and all of the therapies we can possibly apply so that they can recover and do well.

In the end, the success of our health system has been that it has made insurance coverage much more expensive, and for me that is a remarkable oversight by most people. They think that all the advances we have made in being able to assist people who are in accidents come at no charge. It doesn't. It costs money, and in the end the money for all of the work that has to be done in rehabilitating an injured person has to come from someplace.

The issue was addressed by us, the Liberals, when we were in the administration from 1985 to 1990, under my guidance from 1988 to September 1990, and we said there was not any prospect of gaining any advantage by going to public auto insurance. We said that quite clearly.

We in fact even made some other decisions about which I'm sure you'll hear from at least one or two of my other colleagues in this House, but in the end you have to understand that when you pay for a service, the money has to come from someplace. It has to be collected. It has to be distributed, and it is really that distribution network that automobile insurance talks about.

1550

Hon Mr Pouliot: Murray Elston wasn't there. What about amendments, Murray?

Mr Elston: The member for Lake Nipigon is always interested in yipping and yapping but he hasn't done very much to help this auto insurance problem anywhere in this province. He has spoken so much and so often in such a flippant way, I wish that he would make one real speech about good public policy.

Hon Mr Pouliot: Photo radar, graduated drivers' licences.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Elston: Mr Speaker, he is even now musing about his announcement that he thinks he might plan to hold some hearings some time, maybe, on graduated licences.

Hon Mr Pouliot: As soon as we are out of here.

Mr Elston: I can't tell whether the guy is interested in doing anything real for the province or whether he just wants to lip off so he can get his name in Hansard and send it out to some constituents who really want to hear from him at some point. If he wants to engage in some of this stuff back and forth across the House, I am prepared today to take him on, but if he's not, then I wish he'd be quiet and let me go on giving my remarks, because it won't be that long before I am finished, and we hope for the last time, at least in this Parliament, that we'll have to deal with auto insurance.

In the end, all I'm saying is that we have some remarkable successes in this province about which to be proud. Our health care system does things it never could before. We can bring people from the brink of death and move them back into a normal situation, or almost normal situation, so that they can really participate in our society. But it costs money to do that, and in the end somebody has to pay for it. It's no different than any other situation where services are asked for. If they're asked for, if they are acquired, then you've got to pay for them, and that's what this auto insurance stuff is all about.

In the mid-1980s, it was seen that a 20% cost increase year after year was too much, and Monte Kwinter in his days stepped in and put a moratorium on any rate increases. At one point we had a 4% rate increase. Mr Nixon, when he became the minister, went further and did some more studies and we came up with a unified classification plan which, when I came in, I discovered caused some real problems for the good drivers, particularly good drivers who were seeing 80% and 100% increases at a time when their records didn't merit it. So we scrapped that and we did away with the system that was there, retaining, as the minister responsible for auto insurance said in his opening remarks, access to the courts for the most severe cases.

In the determination of what we should do, and it has been alluded to here before, there were some suggestions that the Liberals would move to make sure that there would not be an increase in auto insurance premiums. In fact, there was the very famous, by now famous—infamous, I guess—announcement in Cambridge of September 1987 wherein the Premier of the day suggested that there was a specific plan, and I was then for another year or so after that engaged to lay out the provisions of the specific plan for the public so that they could actually come up with some reasonable, or at least contained, cost increases.

For my part, I can tell you, Mr Speaker, that looking into the insurance industry was not one of the reasons I came into public life, but I did come into—

Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: We need a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: I would ask the table to ascertain whether there is a quorum in the House.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Bruce has the floor.

Mr Elston: Well, at least part-time anyway, Mr Speaker. Thank you very much for that.

In any event, over the year or so following my appointment as Minister of Financial Institutions, which began in August 1988, I sought to set out the circumstances under which we could make a more reasonably costed program to pay for the insurance coverage in the province of Ontario, and it's not an easy thing to try to make sure that you get a reasonably priced program that will intervene in a way which will actually assist and pay for the services that are needed by accident victims.

There were a whole series of groups of accident victims, if you take a look at the way the world shakes down. There are some who are accident victims without any personal physical injuries. There are those who lose money as a result of a loss of a vehicle or a loss of personal goods in the car. Those are relatively easier to deal with than others, because it's a little easier to talk about those tangible pieces of property in a way that is dispassionate. You can always make some determinations about how far you go to intervene with respect to those losses. To be quite honest, it's easier to put a numerical value on any piece of personal property, even if it were considered to be an heirloom or a rare or exotic antique type of car, as some people often used to come and talk to me about, being priceless in nature.

Then there are the others who suffer minor physical injuries. There are those who need to be assisted quickly. They have to be helped on their feet to get back to work very quickly. Those people require a different set of interventions to make sure they come back into the society in which they were involved before the accident than do the people who had no injuries at all. Sometimes you can wait to get your personal property replaced, but you cannot, in my view, wait at all to have your physical conditions assisted back to a normal state as quickly as possible.

Then there are people who are injured in a more serious fashion, although not permanently, but who require intensive interventions. There is another group of people who then are seriously and permanently injured: those people whom we know quite well we cannot ever bring back to the way things were, or even close to it, because they have lost an important bodily function's use.

Then, if you look at those lists which I have formulated for today's speech but are probably not exhaustive—you can probably break them down further, if you wish—you have the group of people who cause the accidents and those people who are purely innocent or

any set of percentages of fault in between.

In the end, the people we decided to intervene for are obviously those people who needed the physical help the most. We put a lot of time into updating a no-fault system which had been brought into place by the previous Progressive Conservative government way back in the 1970s. In fact, schedule C, which contained the no-fault benefits, was revamped and was expanded. We decided that if we could get the services delivered much more quickly, then we could actually help the less injured get back to normal more quickly and we could do away with a system which really was, in a way, extending the less serious injury cases for a long time in the courts as people waited and waited to maximize claims.

We chose to minimize the expense of going through that court system, and that's part of the reason why the threshold no-fault system came in. It was designed to take as many of the premiums as we possibly could get and move them off into the payments for the accident victims.

We then also retained the current system—that is, the tort system—for the most seriously injured, because we believed that there should be an independent adjudication in a court of law where people could take into consideration the circumstances that each of the people had in their life prior to the accident. Of course, it's only available for people who were without fault or the major blame in an accident. Only they could go through the courts, just as the system was prior to the introduction of the OMPP.

All of that was designed to make sure that we could maximize the return of premium to the people who needed it and to make sure that we had a good degree of service in the no-fault system so that people could get access to services they needed to put things right.

It has always been clear, I think, that although there has been a bit of haggling over the loss to cars and personal effects, generally speaking that has been taken care of very well. But the public policy reason why we visit this at all, apart from the fact that we mandate that you have to have insurance, is because the Legislative Assembly of Ontario is charged with protecting the welfare and the wellbeing of the people of the province. If you have to carry some insurance, then we want to make sure you can do it and expect a reasonable level of service.

1600

I've given you a rough outline of how we got to where we were. It took numerous hours, weeks and months of meetings. It took a lot of haranguing here in the Legislative Assembly. In fact, the member for Welland-Thorold in those days sat back there someplace in the official opposition benches and read for about 17 hours a number of telephone messages and notes as he launched his by now famous diatribe on how bad the

OMPP was going to be.

It was certainly not a wait-and-see attitude with him. He knew it was bad from the outset; the New Democrats knew it was bad from the outset. I might even offer that there are a number of Progressive Conservatives who offered that their opinion likewise was that it would not be a good system for Ontario.

I was surprised beyond belief, when I was coming to work this morning from good old Walkerton, Ontario, to hear on the radio that Mike Harris was quoted as saying, "If something ain't broke, don't fix it," referring to the OMPP. I was happy to hear that because in my days as Minister of Financial Institutions, I wasn't absolutely sure that Mike Harris was one of the supporters of the OMPP.

To be quite honest, I can't tell you that everybody in the Liberal caucus was a unanimous supporter of the OMPP.

Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold): Names, Murray, names.

Mr Elston: Well, let me name a couple of names. I think there are always people who have some doubts about man-made or human-made systems in this province and everybody is right to question a major change, which really was the case with the OMPP. It was a change away from a system that we knew a great deal about. Sometimes it's better the devil you know than the devil you don't, so I had a number of people from the legal community who were wondering to me privately, and sometimes out loud in some other meetings, whether or not this wasn't a bit of a risky situation, to think that you might be able to introduce this system and it might cause a whole series of other shock waves.

It did cause some shock waves, but those largely have been political in nature; it certainly did deal a bit of a blow to some of the people who used to be supporters of the Liberal Party when it came to the 1990 election. But by and large the bulk of the financial circumstances as a result of insurance claims in this province, for automobile anyway, have been dealt with effectively.

My leader asked a question today that basically paraphrased the intervention by the member for Nipissing, and while I thank both the leaders of the opposition parties for thinking at least that it's not broke, I would have to volunteer that there have been and there are some weaknesses in the OMPP. It's very, very clear that there was no indexing for people who had long-term needs for the weekly benefits. But if you were a permanently and severely injured person, then you would be suing through the courts in any event, and it would seem that there was a bit of tradeoff with respect to how far you took the amount of money that was being given on a short-term basis into a permanent allowance.

Mr Harnick: The threshold, Murray. The other weakness is the threshold.

Mr Elston: The member for Willowdale, who will speak later, is just now actually getting counsel from another member of the bar, and I think they are probably even now conspiring as to how to undo these reasonable and rational remarks I am offering. He mentions that the threshold was a weakness.

The test to have the most severely injured, the most difficult cases, dealt with in the courts was a decision we made and left with the courts to determine, because we didn't want to put on some kind of template that would say, "Here you go; there you don't." We wanted to make it difficult so that people would know their interests were being adjudicated and so that we would know there was some kind of an external factor applied to what was an internalized insurance system.

I have quite clearly stood by the threshold. I still think it's a reasonable and rational way to go about things, and I think to a large extent it is much more manageable than the member for Hamilton Mountain suggested it was in his opening remarks. I think it is far from the unmanageable, unpredictable setup he alleged.

But here we are, now dealing with 164, which is of course the New Democrats' answer to the OMPP. It's interesting to note that he claims to have the system which will perfect stability and rates. He has, even today, threatened the insurance industry that if it doesn't behave, he will intervene to make sure that its misbehaviour is checked—as he did when he first came into his role, as I recall. He has suggested, both privately, I suspect, and publicly, I can say, that he would prefer to have public auto insurance, and in some ways, a lot of people, both in the insurance business and people in the street, see 164 as a way of creating such calamity that in fact he will have his way.

That's maybe part of the world of New Democrats these days: that if you cannot do directly those things which you once stood for, then maybe you can do them sort of in a roundabout fashion; maybe you can go round the flank of everybody, get them from behind and sneak up on them. Maybe that's really what 164 is all about.

There isn't any question that 164 has been amended several times by the time it's got to this third-reading stage. In fact, Mr Speaker, as you would know, having gone through all of the committee reports, we had a mass of information tabled with us on two or three different occasions. In fact, although this is not the list of amendments, this little piece of information which I have here represents the thickness of the amendments which were tabled on the committee hearings for 164.

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): That's a cheap political trick, Murray. Come on. Where were your amendments?

Mr Elston: The member for Scarborough Centre, who was the committee Chairman and who is of course in this impartial—

Mr Owens: I'm the parliamentary assistant. That shows how often you were in attendance.

Mr Elston: Oh, I'm sorry. The member for Scarborough Centre was the parliamentary assistant. He is responsible for this terrible piece of crap that he's foisting on the people of the province. He mentions that I wasn't at the committee hearings much. To tell you the truth, I wasn't, because I became critic of this role just as we came into the current sittings. He knows that and he should in fact apologize. I didn't go to any of the committee hearings before because it wasn't my responsibility for our Liberal caucus. You know that Mr Mancini, who has retired now, was in charge of this, and I'm proud to pick up where Mr Mancini has left off, because Mr Mancini and I both believe the same thing about 164: that it's a bit of a plot by the New Democrats to salve their own wounded conscience for withdrawing from the public auto insurance promise they made before.

I could go back and read a few things that were said by Mr Rae and by other people who also didn't attend the committee hearings so that the member for Scarborough Centre would feel much better about my not being there. But I can tell you that every day that I attended those committee hearings, we were offering amendments that were, in the event, as it turned out, successful in being passed, sometimes with respect to some very minor, technical stuff, but we worked to improve it and in fact we made some improvements. The member for Scarborough Centre is probably over there aching now because they didn't think of making such small changes.

In fact, at one point I even found myself an ally with the member for Durham West, I think it was, Mr Wiseman. We in fact together, because we represented rural ridings, suggested that certain amendments be made so that the mail could get out to the people who got registered mail notice of certain things happening through the now-to-be-passed 164.

I was happy enough to make those amendments so that people would feel that they were being dealt with fairly. In fact, what we did in committee, both Mr Wiseman and myself, was really to make the suggestion that the service level of the Canadian post office under the charge of the Progressive Conservatives federally had deteriorated to the extent that we could no longer rely upon the usual five-day notice provisions, which usually appear in civil procedure manuals and rules in the province of Ontario.

We made some changes, but in the end this 164 is not going to be the salvation that the member for Hamilton Mountain thinks it will be. As I said before, the insurance industry has changed because the health

professions have perfected procedures which to this point in time were really only dreamed about. We do so many things now that we didn't used to do. We are able to be successful in bringing people back into society, when just a few years ago they were lost to us altogether.

1610

As long as we continue to have those successes, whether it's Bill 164 or Bill 68 or the former tort system or whatever, it is not possible for us to predict that the costs will for ever remain stable. Right now, we will sustain cost increases with respect to auto insurance in Ontario, sure. In fact, when I was looking at the review of some of the presenters in the committee hearing stages, I came across a Mr Carr who was appearing for FAIR, I think, and basically what Mr Carr did was agree with the government, which said that basically Bill 164 was going to mean at least a 4.5% increase beyond the Ontario motorist protection plan.

Mr Harnick: He's an economist, not an actuary.

Mr Elston: I'm sorry, Mr Carr is an economist; he is not an actuary. That's exactly right. The member for Willowdale is right. But he is at least able to comment, and he was agreeing that there would be a minimum 4.5% increase beyond the OMPP as a result of Bill 164. It's going to happen. New changes are going to occur, new interventions are going to occur, and the people are going to want to have access to those if they have been involved in personal injury accidents. When that occurs, the cost of the product will have to go up because, as we have discovered in this 1990s Ontario, there is nothing for free. It has to be paid for. If we need it, then we have to be prepared to find the resources to pay for it.

I think, therefore, it is a problem for me, as a former minister, for the current minister or for anybody who would be minister—and there are some, as we look around—for anyone, to suggest that we are going to get—I just got the two-minute notice here, and I have no two-minute game plan for my remarks.

We will not be in very good stead to promise that there will not be rate increases. Whatever it is that we need to make sure that our people can come back into our society, I suspect this House will want to take the steps. I suspect that the companies which offer the coverage will want to offer the coverage to those people and offer the services to get the people back into society. But it will cost money. That is sort of the one final statement. If we need it for people, whether they were at fault or not at fault, we will probably intervene to make sure we can give it to them.

I don't understand why people don't get to that one simple lesson of this whole long trek through auto insurance: If you want it, buy it. You have to pay for it. In the end, you can't have anything for nothing, and it doesn't matter what you do with the system. I believe

that Bill 164 diminishes the whole regime under the OMPP.

I believe that Mr Charlton could have taken what changes he has made, the real changes he has made, and gone to the regulations and actually expanded the coverages. He would have expanded the cost, no question about that, but he would have been able to get as good coverage, in fact in my view better coverage, without passing Bill 164. In fact, he could have done all of this two years ago, and he would not have lost a single step. The only thing he did was cover his tracks from the retreat at Honey Harbour. That's what this is all about. As a result, the people of this province are going to be paying huge numbers of dollars so that the New Democrats can save face. I'm voting against Bill 164.

Mr Harnick: When I rise to speak on the issue of auto insurance, I think of a couple of things. I think of where we were when the NDP got elected. I think of the promise to give us public auto insurance, I think of the promise to restore the rights of innocent accident victims and I think of the promise to keep premiums down—in fact, to lower premiums—and when I look at those three promises, I see that every one has been broken. Not one of those promises factored its way into Bill 164; not one. Public auto insurance is gone. I need not discuss that. It's not before us. All I can say is, we don't have public auto insurance—and in reality, thank goodness for that.

The second issue is what's happened to innocent accident victims. Their rights haven't been restored under Bill 164; their rights have been diminished. I'm going to get into that in a little while.

The other thing is, and we know from the questions and answers today in question period, the fact is that the costs are going up. The premiums that every single person in this province is going to have to pay are going to be increased and they're going to be increased in significant numbers. At the same time as they're going to be increased significantly, the rights of the innocent accident victims are being reduced. The innocent accident victims are paying for the increased benefits—and I admit there are increased benefits, but the innocent victim is having his rights eroded to pay the increased benefits for those who are at fault for accidents. That's the reality.

I want to go back for a moment. Everyone knows of my conflict of interest in this area. It's enormous. You can start shouting at me and tell me what my conflict is, but the fact of the matter is, I'm the only person in this place, I suspect, who has acted for innocent accident victims, who's seen what happens to innocent accident victims as the result of a car accident, to see what happens to families, to see what happens to jobs, to see what happens to the ability of a family to maintain an income.

Hon Mr Pouliot: That is an interest, not a conflict.

Mr Harnick: My interest, as the Minister of Transportation indicates, is a sincere interest and that's why I stand here today to review where we've been on the issue of auto insurance and where I think we're going.

When I first started practising law, the accident benefits aspect of an auto policy paid a victim, regardless of fault, \$70 a week. Shortly after I started to practise law, that went up to \$140 a week. It's always been the philosophy of reasonable-minded people that everyone who is involved in a car accident is entitled to adequate compensation so that they are not left destitute, and that's whether they're at fault or whether they're not at fault. The line, or the distinction, has always been that if you're the innocent victim then you can claim, beyond that amount of no-fault benefits, your actual losses.

That is the way auto insurance proceeded in this province from the early 1970s up until the OMPP. The innocent victim could always claim his actual damages. That's what the law has been from time immemorial. If someone caused you harm, if someone caused you damage and they were at fault, you were entitled to be compensated. It wasn't until the OMPP came along that this started to change. The fact of the matter is that when we reach a point when we try and compensate everybody more than adequately, the only way we can afford to do it is by taking benefits away from the innocent accident victims, so that they end up getting less than what their actual damages are.

The OMPP came along at a time when insurance rates were going up significantly, and the issue was premiums. Everyone knows that the issue was premiums, and the public wanted premiums to be stabilized; they wanted premiums to no longer continue to escalate.

When we looked at the various schemes of automobile insurance, it became pretty clear that innocent victims were going to have to give something up, and what innocent victims were going to give up was the right to claim for their pain and suffering if they'd been involved in an accident and suffered an injury that was not serious. That was the whole rationale. We would get rid of those small claims that clogged the system, that were costing insurers an awful lot of money.

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It was with that in mind that the Liberal government and David Peterson, who had a very specific plan—we all remember about David Peterson's comment, "I have a very specific plan." It took him two years to find it, but he had a very specific plan. But that was the philosophy that ultimately the OMPP was built upon.

The OMPP came along and the OMPP raised those accident benefits, and I think realistically, to \$600 a

week, and it gave people the option to purchase up to \$1,000 a week in coverage. It also included an increase of up to \$500,000 in medical expenses. Now, we all know that we have OHIP in this province, so that was never a very acute issue, but it was an issue none the less. Those, to me, were the two best things about the OMPP.

The OMPP also came along and brought in, for the first time in the province of Ontario, a threshold, and that threshold effectively took the rights away from 97% of injured innocent accident victims to claim for their personal injuries and their economic losses. If you didn't pass that threshold, you lost your rights.

I can tell you, Mr Speaker, that threshold was a mountain of a threshold. That threshold said that for you to claim, if you're an innocent victim, your injury had to be "permanent, serious impairment of an important bodily function caused by continuing injury which is physical in nature." So it had to be permanent and serious. It had to be for ever serious. It had to be physical. Mental or psychological injuries were now jettisoned. And it had to be continuous. In other words, if you got better, you were out of luck. We all know, people practising on behalf of innocent accident victims, that maybe 3% of innocent victims are getting through that threshold. Only 3% can climb that mountain of a threshold.

And all of this was in the name of keeping premiums down. Well, I can tell you, Mr Speaker, that the OMPP failed in that regard. Premiums have continued to go up, and in fact I would defy anyone in this room, in this Legislature right now, to tell me that the accident benefit portion of their insurance premium has not gone up by 50%. Go and look at your records. Go and see what's happened since June 22, 1990.

At any rate, it was within that milieu that the NDP got elected on the basis of promises to give back rights to innocent victims and promises to hold the line on premiums.

Well, Bill 164 came along and broke those promises, and I appreciate that the minister didn't want to break those promises and he tried to be as benign as he could in terms of how he was going to develop a policy of auto insurance. But the reality is that a very simple procedure could have taken place. The simple procedure could have been to take the structure of the OMPP, and if we took the structure of the OMPP and kept those realistic benefits intact, all we had to do was lower the threshold. All we had to do was ensure that those with serious injuries were not dropping off the table.

But did the NDP do that? Not at all. They raised the accident benefits to unrealistic levels, and there's no question that the motive was good, but the ability to pay for it has not yet been tested. We know that when you increase certain benefits, the cost has got to go up, and the minister can deny that till he's blue in the face, but

it isn't going to work. But all that had to happen was that those benefits that had been passed in this Legislature and that were realistic should have remained in place. Instead of the government trying to reinvent the wheel and confuse everybody in the province of Ontario as to what its auto insurance policy meant, all it had to do was lower the threshold.

I suggest, and I suggested it going back three years, all you had to do was take out the comma between "permanent" and "serious" and put in the word "or." Then all you had to do is put the word "psychological" beside "physical." Granted, there would have been, based on what the insurers tell me, about a 7% or 8% increase in premiums to do that, but the fact of the matter is, it's going to be a whole lot less than what we're getting out of Bill 164.

Let me tell you why. You see, the Liberal plan gave innocent accident victims cancer of the left lung, because it took away the rights of 97% of people to claim for their economic loss and for their pain and suffering unless they climbed that mountain of a threshold. If you didn't climb the threshold, you were out of luck. The NDP plan is a little different. They have a threshold, but the threshold applies only to pain and suffering.

If you climb their threshold, which admittedly is less, then you're allowed to claim for your pain and suffering, but your economic loss is totally lost, it's gone. The NDP has effectively given the innocent accident victim cancer of the right lung; they've taken away what is even more fundamental than the right to claim for pain and suffering. They've taken away the fact that people lose money in accidents. They're told by the minister: "We're going to give you a benefit and that benefit is going to replace what your actual losses are even though there's going to be a differential. You can't claim for that differential and the reason you can't claim for that differential is because we need that differential to pay for the negligent drivers who have to be covered under this enhanced plan that Bill 164 offers us."

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: A quorum call.

The Acting Speaker: I would ask the table to ascertain if there is quorum.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals (Mr Alex D. McFedries): A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Willowdale has the floor.

Mr Harnick: At any rate, I cannot believe, for the life of me, that anybody could sit down to reinvent the wheel and develop a new policy of auto insurance coverage in this province and take away the right of victims to claim for their actual economic losses, their out-of-pocket expenses. Nobody's saying don't give credit for what the accident benefits pay you, but you're

taking away money out of people's pockets. How can't you see that this is wrong? It's inconceivable.

Even the Liberals said, "If you climb the mountain of a threshold, you've got your money for your out-of-pocket expenses." Even the Liberals, in their scheme, did that. Granted, it was a mountain of a threshold that only 3% could climb, but it's inconceivable to think that a government would come along and take away someone's economic losses.

I, for the life of me, would never have predicted in a million years that you could put 74 dippers in a room and they would come out with that solution. It's absolutely inconceivable that 74 government members got into a room together and decided to take away the right of individuals to claim what their actual out-of-pocket expenses were.

Mr Stockwell: It's 71 dippers.

Mr Harnick: It's 71 dippers; I'm corrected. It's inconceivable. It's positively inconceivable.

I tell you, in return they've given certain benefits. And I have no objection; I applaud them. If you get injured in an accident, this plan will pay you up to \$1,000 a week. I can't complain about enhanced benefits, but there are areas in this bill that are not enhanced.

If you're involved in a fatal accident—take the example of an average income earner, a parent in a family who's involved in an accident, who makes \$40,000 or \$45,000 a year and might be 35 or 40 years old and has 20, 25 or 30 years still to work. The most that family can claim, being the innocent victims suffering the pecuniary loss, is \$200,000. That pays for four or five years of income. What are you going to do for the rest of the time?

I've got to give the NDP credit, because when the Steelworkers came in to the committee and I put that proposition to them, they were so well briefed by the minister's staff that they said that was fine. "We'll take the \$200,000 even though we've lost \$1 million and our families won't be looked after after the four or five years of equivalent income is paid."

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I've got to give the NDP a lot of credit. They woodshedded those witnesses better than I could woodshed a witness myself, any day of the week. But the fact of the matter is, economic loss is suffered by that family. That family is going to suffer an economic loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars, and this bill takes away the right to claim for that actual economic loss.

Let's talk about a child, a child who's an innocent victim of an accident, driving with his seatbelt on in his parents' car. A car runs a stop sign and hits that part of the car that the child is seated in, and the child suffers a head injury or is rendered a paraplegic or a quadriplegic. What happens to that child?

Under this scheme, that child is going to get his pain

and suffering. The Supreme Court of Canada says that is upwards of around \$240,000. That child may have a whole lifetime of working history to go. He may have 40 or 50 years to work. You know what he gets for his economic loss? Under this plan—and I worked it out in the committee with lawyer Endicott. I worked it out with him and he agreed, and it's in the record of the committee: \$29,000, barely above the poverty line, for the rest of that child's life, even though he might have been an A student, even though he may have been on his way to being the president of the international Teamsters union or a doctor or a lawyer or leader of the NDP. The fact of the matter is, that child is going to get \$29,000 and won't have one single luxury to look forward to in his life.

This bill, this bill that all of these people got into the room and concocted, took away the economic loss that this young person was entitled to achieve. I tell the people of Ontario: If you didn't know about this before, get on the phone and call the minister and tell him he's wrong. Maybe he won't implement this bill or maybe he'll come back with some amendments to restore economic rights. But the fact of the matter is, he has taken away the protection from families and from children and from young people and from working men and women across this province to claim for their actual economic losses.

I tell you, Speaker, that I very much wanted to be able to come here and support a bill that was going to give back rights to innocent victims. I know the minister's intentions were benign and good intentions. They were honest intentions. I'm not going to criticize the minister for a bad bill on the basis of his motive. I'm not going to criticize him on that basis. I can tell you that he worked hard with the insurance industry and with the lawyers to try and come up with a threshold that everybody could live with.

Also, he's given me his commitment that there will be an economic loss endorsement provided somewhere in the regulations that aren't yet written. He's given me his commitment that there will be that economic loss endorsement, that it will be available at the time the bill is proclaimed, that it will be a broad endorsement, that it's going to be wide enough to cover the examples that I've pointed out and that it will cover future loss of income, loss of earning capacity, it will cover fatal accident situations, and, on the strength of commitments from the insurance industry—and I have a letter here which I'm going to quote in a moment—that it will be affordable.

Mr Stockwell: Do you believe him?

Mr Harnick: My friend from Etobicoke West says, "Do you believe him?" Well, in my heart of hearts I want to believe him because the hole in this piece of legislation is so gaping that you can drive a truck through it, and it bothers me.

It bothers me to think that I've gotten down on my hands and knees to grovel for this after the auto insurance hearings, where everybody, literally every single witness, criticized this aspect of the bill, and the best that the minister is going to do is permit people who are innocent the opportunity to pay an additional coverage for what should be fundamental and a basic part of every auto insurance policy in this province. But if that's the best I can do, it's better than nothing.

I thank the minister for at least listening to the witnesses and at least acknowledging that there's a problem with his bill and saying he is going to do something to try and fix it. It's not the method I would have used, but at least the minister was attentive to it.

It bothers me and it will always bother me to see a threshold, to see economic loss taken away, but those are the realities of the day, I suppose. Those are the realities of the day. I can only tell you that even the insurers have said to me that the bill, properly constructed, can have a lower threshold, it can contain automatic economic loss coverage and it could be cheaper than what the increases of Bill 164 are going to bring.

I might just digress for a moment, Mr Speaker, and tell you that the insurance industry has played a very significant part in, hopefully, the development of this economic loss endorsement and as well in the development of a threshold that I think in some respects will be better than the \$15,000 deductible that the government originally proposed. Again, I thank the minister for being attentive and for listening to what other people said and for being flexible enough to make those changes to satisfy some of the so-called stakeholders in this issue.

But I can tell you that I have a letter from the Insurance Bureau of Canada, from Stan Griffin, who is the vice-president of that organization. He says, "The insurance industry continues to be prepared to work with the legal community to develop this endorsement around the concepts as agreed in return for their support for the threshold alternative put forth by the government."

I tell the insurance industry, you've made that commitment. You've made that commitment in return for what you got on the threshold, and I hope, as much as I want to believe the minister, and I'm going to, that I can believe the Insurance Bureau of Canada and the representations that they've made.

In another letter, dated June 22, 1993, a carbon copy of which was supplied to me, it says, "Now that the amended bill has been moved out of committee and will be given third reading shortly in the Legislature, we are eager to commence work on development of the mandatory optional excess economic loss endorsement."

The letter goes on to say, "As you are aware, there

are a number of issues to be addressed to ensure that the endorsement provides reasonable cover that is affordable to those who need it. We look forward to working together to develop that product."

I thank the Insurance Bureau of Canada and the legal community for the commitment that they've made, and the minister, and I hope in my heart of hearts that we can proceed to develop that economic loss endorsement. If we don't, I see the fallout from this bill as being something that the people of Ontario will not be prepared to live with.

If you take a look at what this bill in effect does, once it takes away economic loss, it creates a meat chart form of compensation for those who are purchasing, at great cost, auto insurance. It creates a highly government-regulated bill and it creates a situation where the government can ultimately take this industry over.

This bill is the precursor of that day. This bill is the precursor of that day, except that as the bill is structured—and my friend Mr Kormos, whose heart, I know, is in this issue on behalf of innocent accident victims—I know that Mr Kormos would not accept this bill on behalf of innocent victims.

But it's a very easy vehicle for the government to make that leap. It creates the meat chart, it creates the highly regulated atmosphere necessary and it creates a situation where, if the insurers can't run it and if profit becomes a dirty word and the profit margins can't be there, then the government can easily take this over. To take this bill over, between that and what it does to innocent accident victims, is a tragedy.

As I indicated earlier, automobile insurance is an issue that's gone very wrong in the province of Ontario. It's gone wrong with the Liberal bill, which took rights away from innocent victims to a degree never imagined: 97% of people taken out of the system.

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Hon Mr Pouliot: We're fixing that.

Mr Harnick: The Minister of Transportation makes a very interesting comment. He says, "We're fixing that." Well, indeed you are, because what you're doing is giving back a minuscule amount of rights to about 15% of people and taking away an even larger principle that people need to survive, and you're the government which was going to help people. I can tell you that Bill 164 will not help people.

The Liberals, as well, were the people who came along and were going to be a government without walls. They were going to be a breath of fresh air in the province of Ontario. I remember that election well, because I ran in it and I lost. I remember that election well and I remember that people said: "The Liberal government is going to look after people. They're going to help people."

When my phone rings and people tell me they broke

their leg or they broke their arm and they're losing income because of it, I tell them that the Liberal OMPP bill took away their rights. That government that was going to help people, David Peterson's government and Murray Elston's government and Lyn McLeod's government, that government took away rights from people who were badly hurt, people who were injured and people who were suffering. When that happened, I said to people, "You've miscalculated." But at any rate, then the NDP came along. I had high hopes that they were going to give those rights back and they didn't do it.

I find it very regrettable, whenever I have to debate the issue of auto insurance, that premiums are always at the top of the ladder. The reason they're at the top of the ladder as prime importance is because most people don't get involved in accidents. As my friend the member for Bruce said, "If you want something, you've got to pay for it," and it's not until people are involved in an accident that they realize how important it is to be covered, to have the protection that they always had until the Liberals and the NDP took over. My premiums have continued to go up. My coverage has continued to go down.

Hon Mr Pouliot: What about your record?

Mr Harnick: The Minister of Transportation, who still has no conception of what happens to an innocent accident victim, shouts across the floor at me, "What about your record?" I have no idea what this minister is even talking about.

Hon Mr Pouliot: You don't have a monopoly.

Mr Harnick: I have no idea when he's making a speech about a transportation issue what he's talking about—

Hon Mr Pouliot: What a coincidence.

Mr Harnick: —but today he's really out to lunch.

But when I stand here and speak about something I'm very serious about, and I talk about people who are battered and bruised and can't go to work and can't afford to look after their families, and I have a minister of the crown shouting inane comments at me, I say to myself that these people as a government have no idea of what happens to an injured and an innocent victim, because they don't care.

This is the party that used to say, "We want to help injured workers." Injured workers suffer the same way auto accident victims suffer, and you don't care, you don't care at all, and that's the reality, because you can't take these rights away from people and say that you care about them, you can't make innocent victims subsidize those who are at fault for accidents so that they can get an amount that is absolutely beyond belief.

You know, \$600 a week isn't bad compensation, if you're at fault for an accident, so that you can carry on looking after your family. You can even protect yourself under the OMPP for \$1,000 week, if that was what your

income level was.

But the fact of the matter is that to raise those benefits and take more rights away from innocent victims, to take more rights away from the innocent, is absolutely, positively wrong, and then to turn around and kick those innocent victims in the teeth by saying, "By the way, it's going to cost you 17% more to pay your premiums," is absolutely out of sight. Every person on those government benches who's going to vote in favour of this piece of legislation and in favour of further erosion of rights of innocent accident victims should be ashamed, because you campaigned on a very different issue.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): We don't need any lectures from you, Charles.

Mr Harnick: My friend the member for Oxford says he doesn't need any lectures from me. What I say to him is, with your attitude, you go and you talk to an innocent accident victim. You try and convince him, with your attitude, that you're right and he's wrong, when he can't feed his family or she can't feed her family, when he can't go to work.

You know, it's very funny, when you people were sitting over here, you had the greatest compassion. What happened to you? What happened to all you people? This is an issue that isn't even costing the government money. This isn't, in austere times, an issue that's even hurting the government. What happened to you people? Where did your conscience go? What happened to you all? I think you all took a wrong turn, and I would urge everybody on the government benches to take a long, hard look as to whether you really want to pass this bill and hurt the people you used to profess to stand for. I think you should take a long, hard look, because I am proudly going to stand and vote against this bill.

Mr Kormos: I'm pleased to have this chance, and I express my appreciation to the House leaders for consenting for the division of time to permit me to speak. This is probably the last significant debate about auto insurance that will be held during this Parliament. Indeed, the next government may well have to engage the issue by way of debate, and I'm confident that there will be those who will want to participate in it. I know I certainly will, because the solution certainly hasn't been arrived at.

Look, let me put it this way: If I've got to be involved in a car accident—and I never, ever thought I'd be in a position to say this—if I had to suffer the tragic fate of being maimed as an innocent victim, of being maimed by the carelessness or drunkenness or negligence of a driver who doesn't care, I say this: By God, please let it happen before this law comes into effect because I tell you, and I never thought I would ever say this, the seriously injured innocent victim is entitled to more compensation and more justice and more fairness under the Ontario motorist protection

plan. Lord knows, I with my colleagues fought OMPP. There were only 19 of us; we were the smallest of opposition parties. We fought no-fault auto insurance. We fought it with all the energy we could muster.

The issue today is about promises and it's about trust, because, you see, we, as New Democrats, promised to people in this province, promised to drivers and to victims and to voters that we would restore to innocent victims their right to full compensation. What could be more basic when you talk about justice? The right of an innocent victim, the person who's not at fault or the person who may not even be a driver, may not even be a passenger in a vehicle, the person who could well be the non-car-owner, the pedestrian, not just on the streets of Toronto but on the streets of any city, town or village in this province, the young person, the student, the senior, the mother, the working woman or man whose right to earn a livelihood is stolen from them.

Our pursuit of that goal of justice for the innocent victim was out of a recognition, as I believed then and as I believe now, that governments and their institutions have to be there to protect people who have things stolen from them, who have things taken from them.

1650

We fought no-fault. We said: "No-fault, no way. No-fault doesn't work," and it hasn't. What I've got here are letters and messages from victims across this province who were victims first of the drunk or careless or reckless or negligent driver and then victims a second time of a no-fault auto insurance system. We fought it, and we fought it with passion, and we fought it for good reason. We promised the people of this province that we'd do things differently.

I suppose I should, and I will, pay tribute to people like Bob Runciman, who engaged in that fight as the critic for the Conservative Party when it was in opposition during the last government; to members like Charles Harnick, who, although not a member at the time, passionately engaged in the fight for the rights of innocent victims; and yes, I'll say it, to Mel Swart, who authored Highway Robbery in 1987 with then Leader of the Opposition Bob Rae, the leading document which outlines what New Democrats believe when it comes to auto insurance. That states unequivocally that real New Democrats are committed to the restoration of the rights of innocent accident victims and their right to use the courts if need be to be compensated.

I appreciate that part of the spin on this bill is a little bit of lawyer-bashing, and yes, I used to practise law, but I want to make this clear: It was criminal law, not personal injury work, though I've learned in my five years here that criminal law is a far more suitable legal background to be involved in politics than is civil litigation. It's oh so easy to talk about, "Oh, yes, the lawyers are in there with their greed," and I've got no real sympathy for lawyers, but you ask David Ripsky,

an innocent victim sitting right here, a victim not only of an at-fault driver but then of an insurance industry and a no-fault system that has denied him month after month his right to compensation. You ask him about no fault. Please, don't listen to me if you don't wish. Talk to the victims. Talk to the victims of the drunk and the careless and the reckless and the negligent drivers and then victims of a no-fault system, a no-fault system that, I tell you, is being heightened by Bill 164, because what few rights were retained for innocent victims in Bill 68 are now being stripped away.

It's about promises by people who sought elected office, and then it's about trust, because those same voters and drivers and innocent victims put their trust in New Democrats. It's trite to say that they didn't re-elect Liberals to government; they didn't elect the Conservative Party to government. They elected New Democrats in one of the largest majority governments this province has ever seen. I am hard pressed to know of a single New Democratic Party candidate who, as a part of her or his election campaign, didn't promise the restoration of innocent accident victims' rights.

I tell you, I attended with pride, with the leader of my party, Mr Rae, at some of the largest forums that he or I have ever attended, some of the largest collections of people who were passionate in their support for him because of his fight for innocent accident victims, because of his promise to restore to innocent victims their right to justice, their right to their day in court, their right to be fully compensated.

We're talking here about legislation that is a victory of the guilty over the innocent, legislation wherein the drunk or the careless or the reckless or the negligent driver could well—and will, I tell you—see herself or himself in receipt of greater benefits than their victim, than the person they attacked with that 2,000 and 3,000 and 4,000 pounds of automobile.

We're talking about a victory of the rich over the poor, because we're talking about a system—and this should concern my colleagues a great deal—wherein the poor, the working women and men and the middle class will be subsidizing the insurance premiums of the wealthy. We're talking about legislation—and who would have thought, from this government—that will increase premiums and reduce, notwithstanding all the sophistry that's been engaged in by propagandists over the last six, nine months, a year, benefits for most injured people, whether they're at fault or no-fault. You don't have to look at it a whole long time and look at some of the language and look at the reduction of no-fault benefits to 90% of net from 80% of gross: There's going to be a significant reduction in benefits for most injured people, be they recipients by virtue of being at fault or not at fault.

You're looking at a so-called cap to \$1,000, and that means only the very wealthy will ever be able to

acquire that cap, because we're talking 90% of net. These are people who are grossing probably in the range of \$1,600, \$1,700, \$1,800 a week. Who's going to be subsidizing their premiums? Who is going to be subsidizing those wealthy people? The women and men from Welland-Thorold who work so hard to earn a living or, as often as not, are denied the opportunity to work for a living.

You see, you don't have to listen to me. Talk to the victims. Talk to the drivers. Talk to the people who have already seen their premiums increase as a result of tax policies. I guarantee you, and the government itself acknowledges, that there's going to be premium increases. I've seen the history of those sorts of low-ball, high-ball scenarios, and I'm convinced it won't be as low as 4% and I'm convinced it might not be as high as 78%, but you can bet your boots it's going to be somewhere in the middle.

This is not a great day for drivers or victims. This is a tragic day for both.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Further debate on Bill 164?

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): It doesn't matter how you look at it; Bill 164 is simply bad legislation. Even if the government chooses to amend it, it will cause irreparable harm to the automobile industry and the whole system in the province of Ontario. Bill 164 will result in higher premiums and lower, less effective benefits. It will give accident victims the right to sue for pain and suffering, subject to a \$15,000 deductible, but prevent people from suing for loss of current or future income, and replacement income for accident victims will rise to \$1,000 a week from the \$600 that's there now.

The minister responsible for this flawed auto insurance legislation recently said that this Bill 164 will push premiums up 4%. Insurance companies want increases, and they'll be looking at 8%. Many of Ontario's six million drivers are not aware of it, but the 5% tax on premiums announced in the spring budget will result in a total of a 17% increase in what motorists pay for insurance. That's the overall increase, which is what's being proposed. This means that some drivers could easily see their auto insurance premiums jump as much as \$200 a year.

Under the Liberal/NDP regimes, the auto insurance marketplace in Ontario has been subject to substantial political turmoil. Bill 164 is just one more example of this turmoil. Under Bill 164, consumers will be forced to needlessly spend more money on auto insurance and have less to spend on food, clothing and shelter.

Many people in Simcoe East have told me that Bill 164 will reverse the progress made over the last few years and impose new additional cost burdens on the consumers of Ontario. They know that if Bill 164

becomes law, the price of their premiums will go up substantially. They have told me that Bill 164 would impose a very complex and difficult-to-administer auto insurance system upon the drivers of Ontario.

1700

The message that I'm getting from people in Orillia, Penetanguishene and across the riding in places like Elmvale and Coldwater and in the townships is that they are concerned about the issue of auto insurance. They're concerned enough that they write and they have written many letters. They care and they want to share their views that the current Ontario motorist protection plan has brought a certain amount of rate stability and rate reduction to the drivers of Ontario during a severe economic recession.

People have grown accustomed to it since the OMPP was introduced, and they believe that time must be allowed to demonstrate whatever adjustments must be made to this system, if any are needed at all.

I would submit that the OMPP is not perfect, but don't you think it makes more sense to improve upon that system, make it better, rather than replace the system altogether with a more expensive and complex product?

My caucus colleagues and I have repeatedly urged the government to withdraw the flawed legislation. The previous Liberal government created a massive upheaval of the insurance system. It was an upheaval that changed the very nature of automobile insurance in Ontario and I would suggest that to subject the public to yet another wholesale change is both unnecessary and counterproductive.

I trust you will no doubt recall that when the NDP came to power in 1990 it threatened to nationalize the auto insurance industry and it wanted to establish a government-run auto insurance company to provide the coverage. Well, I remember that. Fortunately for the hard-pressed Ontario taxpayers, the NDP was convinced by strong opposition that doing that would put more than 19,000 people out of work and cost upwards of \$1.6 billion, and so agreed not to proceed.

Unfortunately, in the narrow scope of this government's vision it remained convinced that it must still tinker with the auto insurance system; hence we are now confronted by the seriously flawed Bill 164.

I share the concerns of the people in Simcoe East who believe that Bill 164 will increase costs and premiums by as much as 20%; make women and older drivers pay substantially more for automobile insurance due to reclassification of risks that will lead to unfair consumer cost subsidization; eliminate choice for consumers—what about the victims' rights in all this?; raise operating costs for companies and result in employment reduction and possible bankruptcies; increase access to tort and higher-cost settlements which will

unduly increase costs; encourage capital flight; and send a signal to investors that the NDP government's freeze-and-squeeze regulatory framework makes Ontario an unattractive investment.

As far as I'm concerned, the expected increase in auto insurance premiums to pay for these increased costs is an unacceptable and unnecessary expense to the auto insurance consumers in the province of Ontario.

Rather than scrapping the OMPP altogether, the NDP government should improve it to ensure that there's fair and certain levels of compensation for loss of income and the victims who need time to recover; more compensation; fast, efficient payments for the victims when they get it; reasonable legal and administration costs; affordable premiums; and accountability for drivers' actions.

I had a constituent in the village of Elmvale who came to me many months ago with regard to the problems he was having. He couldn't even get his \$185 a week that he was trying to get. There seemed to have been some problem with regard to the way the system was working.

As I've said before, we want to improve on what we had. We didn't need a whole overhaul of the system. I would suggest that Bill 164 does not even come close to satisfying the requirements the people have out there. I am concerned that the enhanced structured benefits for economic loss contained in 164 are too rich and likely to become as unsustainable as Workers' Compensation Board benefits.

There should be no doubt in anybody's mind that the PC caucus does not support this bill. Bill 164 is considered by all concerned to be hopelessly flawed in its design and its intent.

Following considerable discussions with consumers and insurance industry representatives, our caucus introduced a few selected amendments to Bill 164, and not to be outdone—it's the same as normal—there was not one that was accepted and they were all voted down.

There were many people who are suspicious of the intention of the NDP to use Bill 164 to force the industry out of business so they can go on and have an excuse to introduce government-run insurance, with all the inefficiencies, cost overruns and bureaucracy that implies. I hope that this is not the case.

I urge the government to withdraw Bill 164 and give the OMPP a chance to prove its worth. Do not scrap a system that appears to be working if all you're going to do is replace it with a more expensive and counterproductive system. The bottom line is what I said in the last paragraph.

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): I originally wasn't going to speak on this item because we do have a number of people who have reviewed this situation very

carefully and I think have made some excellent deputations here this afternoon, but I must admit that I did receive a copy of a presentation from a person who has been in the field for a number of years through an insurance agency, Bill Starr, and I was very taken by the concerns that were expressed in this particular presentation of his and I just felt that these were some concerns that needed to be articulated here this afternoon in the House.

The basic summary: I think the minister has indicated that there are additional benefits through this bill, and I guess there's no disagreement in that, but the bill also takes away benefits. So it gives on the one hand and takes away on the other. I think the general summary from most of those who've been involved with this bill is that it takes away more benefits than it adds. But what it does add is additional cost, and the bottom line is that it causes more problems than it solves.

There has been a statement in the press that perhaps this could result in about \$200 extra for the motorist in the province of Ontario, and I think if you break that down, that's quite possible. We've already seen a 5% increase because of the retail sales tax. This particular bill the minister has indicated will result in about a 3% to 4% increase in the cost of insurance to the motorist, but those who are involved and have experience in the industry over a period of time say that that quite likely could be 7%. When you add on an additional amount from the industry itself in terms of its particular needs, it's quite easy to see how the average motorist in the province of Ontario could receive an increase in the vicinity of 20%. If you're paying \$1,000 today in insurance, tomorrow you could well be paying \$1,200. So that's how the \$200 would be arrived at.

I think that flies in the face of our general economic situation and our thrust to keep expenses under control, but this is a bill to save face. This is a bill that was concocted because the public insurance concept came forward, it didn't fly, there had to be backtracking from it and there had to be something to fill the void, and this is the bill that does that.

The general impact, though, will be that there will be more cost to those who need insurance and there will be rights, in particular rights of innocent victims to sue, that will be removed.

We're talking about people, for example, a self-employed person, perhaps a painter, who no longer is able to pursue his or her particular profession and they have lost the right to sue, lost the right to seek economic payments, or perhaps a recent graduate who has a whole career to look forward to in the province of Ontario but again the right to seek economic redress has been removed.

A couple of the specific comments that are made in the brief I mentioned that concern me a great deal: One comment that's made in this brief is that income under

the Ontario motorist protection plan, the plan that exists today, provides adequate income for the majority of injured victims.

I must say that the brief indicates that the Ontario motorist protection plan has flaws—there is no question about that; it needs to be addressed—but Bill 164 is the wrong way to do it.

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Difficulties, for example, have occurred in the past because those claiming income benefits have sometimes given information that has been at odds with their income tax statements. In other words, they have built up their last four weeks of income above and beyond the level that is substantiated by their income tax returns, and this, apparently, is to achieve the maximum benefits.

Now, who pays? We might say: "That's fine. If they get a little bit extra out of their income benefits through insurance, who cares? Who cares about that?" But the question is, who pays for the extra coverage that they get? The answer clearly, Mr Speaker, is that you and I and all the other motorists in the province of Ontario who are insured have to pick up that extra cost.

The brief goes on to say that many of these people do not return to work. They visit doctors regularly to support their claim. The doctors receive a regular income from OHIP for the visits and the drivers—they're talking in this case about taxi drivers—continue to receive tax-free income. So not only does the cost of the whole auto insurance program suffer, but the cost suffers for health care purposes.

Again, who pays? It's the people of the province of Ontario who are forced to pay this extra amount, both through the health care system and through their auto insurance. Yet seriously injured innocent victims who meet the threshold, who presently can sue for lost income, have that right removed under the bill.

Another area of concern is about death benefits. Again, the right to sue has been removed for economic loss. Careless drivers are treated in exactly the same fashion as are innocent victims. The families of innocent victims are only given a token amount which in most cases would amount to three or four years of income, I gather. But once the money is gone, through the legal system, there is no ability to seek an adequate compensation. That's removed through Bill 164.

It's also interesting to indicate that claims can be made by people from other countries, stating that they are dependent upon the deceased for support. Bill 164 does nothing to address that particular situation.

Moving on to the area of rehabilitation in the couple minutes I have left, the brief indicates that the present cost of rehabilitation of about \$500,000 is adequate in most cases and there is a form of redress if that isn't adequate. Since the introduction, I might say, of the

Ontario motorist protection plan, there has been quite an increase in the number of rehabilitation services: physiotherapy, psychological services, these kind of services. The cost of these services, although not paid through OHIP, is expected to be paid through auto insurance.

Certainly, as a result of this bill, there will more abuse in these particular areas. There will be a greater cost that'll have to be borne by those who are purchasing auto insurance in the province of Ontario. The insurers must continue to make payment of these services, even though they know that the claim is fraudulent. This will carry on and this particular bill does nothing to address this situation.

In the last 30 seconds, the final concern is with regard to the arbitration process, which today is six months behind the times, where the arbitrators are dealing with issues beyond their control, making substantial claims. They have very little training in that regard and this is something again that this bill does not address but will affect the amount of insurance that you and I will pay in the future.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable minister has reserved a few minutes at the end to sum up. The honourable minister and government House leader.

Hon Mr Charlton: I think what I wanted to say in summing up was to thank a number of people who have played, from my perspective, a very important role in the process over the last almost three years now.

First of all, let me say thank you to Blair Tully, who was my deputy at the auto insurance review, and to all the staff at the auto insurance review. They not only did a magnificent job in terms of the work on this project and one that came before it, but they also now hold the distinction of being probably the only bureaucracy to disappear all on its own at the end of its task and to not continue, therefore, to burden the public purse.

I'd like to thank my parliamentary assistant, Steve Owens, for his very able work on this bill in the House and in committee. He did a magnificent job of dealing with this bill through the committee stage at the same time as he was out learning to drive and getting his licence in this province.

To the members of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs from both sides of the House, to my own caucus colleagues, who aptly represented the government legislation, but to the opposition members as well—and I should correct the second to last speaker from the third party. There was one major amendment to the legislation that resulted from a lot of work done by the member for Willowdale. That amendment was accepted by the government.

To the opposition party House leader, Mr Elston, for his input and to the critic for the Conservative Party, Mr Tilson, for his input, I thank them. Their comments did

not go unnoticed, nor did the amendments they proceeded with go unnoticed.

But especially to the member for Willowdale, although he stood in his place this afternoon and spoke against the bill, which is not only understandable from him, but the member for Willowdale took the time, in spite of his opposition to the legislation, to proceed to deal with two major issues around the bill behind the scenes, which led to amendments that he referred to in his comments this afternoon that will help to make the bill a better piece of legislation as a result.

To the members of my own staff, to Mr Harnick's best friend, Hugh O'Reilly, who is my chief of staff, and to his wife, who was his predecessor in the position, Anne Creighton, who helped me and led me through this process, I owe a lot. To Joy Klopp and Val Fogarty and Brian Donlevy, who helped me through the difficulties and my parliamentary assistant through the difficulties of the legislative process, and to Lucy Rybka Becker and Gene Long, who helped me in all of those difficult scrums with the media, my very sincere thanks.

To all of the people who were interested in automobile insurance reform and who took the time to make their views known to me, a special thanks to all of those activists in the legal community, to a number of people from a variety of victims' groups and to the insurance industry. The input that went into this legislation from all stakeholders, from all sides, was extremely important in building this package of balances between the need for reform and the costs of those reforms and so on and so forth.

Lastly, my thanks to the member for Welland-Thorold for having helped to keep me focused on the issue that he raises so often, innocent victims. There are innocent victims of accidents; there are also innocent victims of each of the insurance systems that we've talked about in this debate, innocent victims of the right to sue, innocent victims of OMPP, and there will be some innocent victims of Bill 164 as well. It's our judgement there will be fewer with Bill 164.

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The Acting Speaker: This completes the time allotted for third reading of Bill 164.

Mr Charlton has moved third reading of Bill 164. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We have five members standing in their places; therefore we will call in—

Hon Mr Charlton: Mr Speaker, I understand we have an agreement to take this vote at 5:45 along with the vote that's been deferred to 5:50 on employment equity.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent to defer this vote until 5:45? I want all members to realize that we have a vote at 5:55 as well. We will need a five-minute bell for that. Do we have unanimous consent for a recorded vote on the third reading of Bill 164 at 5:45? Do we have agreement? Agreed.

Mr Elston: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: Might I suggest, although we haven't talked about this, that one five-minute bell for both votes would seem to be reasonable. I certainly would agree to that on behalf of the Liberal Party so that the members be called once, that doors be opened just for—

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent for a five-minute bell for both votes with the door being unlocked for a short period of time between votes? Agreed. The vote will therefore be at 5:55.

RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LA TAXE DE VENTE AU DÉTAIL

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 32, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la taxe de vente au détail.

VEHICLE TRANSFER PACKAGE
STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES DOSSIERS
DE TRANSFERT DE VÉHICULES

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 34, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Personal Property Security Act in respect of Vehicle Transfer Packages / Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi sur les sûretés mobilières à l'égard des dossiers de transfert de véhicules.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): I believe when last debated, the member for Mississauga North, Mr Offer, had the floor. Further debate in the normal rotation? Further debate on the government side? The honourable member for St Catharines, official opposition.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this, yet another tax bill, another increase in costs for consumers and taxpayers in the province of Ontario at a time when I believe it's essential to leave as much money as possible in the hands of consumers, who are able to make the appropriate purchases and get the economy moving.

The provisions of these two bills, which are together as a package, essentially make it more complicated for a private transaction. It means that the government is intruding further when people are making purchases of used vehicles. A lot of those that used to take place were not particularly complicated, not particularly costly, but it's obvious that the Treasurer and the government are interested in getting every last penny

possible out of taxpayers and that's why they have brought forward this particular provision.

The vehicle transfer package is what I think most people would agree to as a thinly disguised tax grab. The government's handling of the economy has necessitated that it derive more revenue from as many places as possible.

Members will recall the uproar that greeted the introduction of these bills initially, where people are forced to pay far more tax than they had anticipated. If a person wishes to claim a tax rebate, buyers obviously face a jungle of new government red tape. If a buyer believes he or she has paid tax based upon an overinflated assessment, the person must pay to have an appraiser estimate the true value of the car, and then the buyer must appeal to the government for a refund. In essence, the government is forcing buyers to pay more money in order to receive tax money that never should have been taken away by the Treasurer in the first place.

I think this has been a consistent argument against this particular tax. The new tax system is unfair to used car buyers and sellers. I think the new scheme forces the sellers to purchase an unnecessary vehicle transfer package. If it were voluntary, that would be reasonable, but when people are compelled to do so, it seems to me that is unnecessary.

Buyers must pay based upon the past history of a car or truck. When the economy is in a recession, buyers often purchase vehicles at a discount of their historical value. The new system forces them to pay tax not based upon the sale price but based upon past history.

I think that if we look around the province now and see many of the bargains that are out there in terms of what people have to pay for various items, we would recognize that on virtually everything out there, people are able to get a better deal than they could when the inflation rate was higher, when the economy was booming, when there were far more people working and fewer people unemployed. At the present time, people are able to get bargains in various areas, yet the government is saying now that if you can get a bargain for a vehicle, and some people are very much in need of a vehicle, you still have to pay tax based upon the history of the car or truck; in other words, the historical value.

It seems to me that when people are out there trying to get a job, and many jobs require a vehicle and the use of a vehicle, one of the ways we could make it easier—some people have been unemployed for some period of time and they don't have the opportunity to go out and purchase a vehicle if they've been on unemployment insurance for a long period of time and perhaps have had to go on general welfare benefits. It would seem to me that if they were able to get a car at a good price and pay the tax based on the price they actually paid—I agree that you need verification for

that—that would be reasonable.

I think of students out there who've had a difficult time this summer, because when the economy isn't booming, it's difficult to get various jobs. Some of those students want to go out to buy a car. Just a little while ago, I was talking to a student by the name of Dean Johnson from the Ottawa Valley. He was mentioning that he had paid, I think, something like half a dozen charges or taxes as a result of purchasing a used vehicle.

We know we have the famous GST, which is the product of the government of Canada. We have the PST, which is the product of the government of Ontario. People are paying gas taxes. They're paying licensing fees which are significantly higher than they were a few years ago. Their insurance costs are now higher. Because of Bill 164, we'll see a higher cost; it remains to be seen just how much. Of course, because of the tax on automobile insurance, we will find that it's going to cost more to operate. I understand from people who know the business that there's a tax on warranties as well now as a result of the budget.

It seems to me that these bills are not supportable because, essentially, they're a tax grab. If you combine them with all of the other taxes we're seeing at this time, and everybody understands you've got to have taxes to run government, we know that in boom times, in good economic times, the ability for the economy to sustain tax increases, although they're never popular, is far greater than it is in difficult economic times.

1730

I had hoped, and I saw certain indications from reading various publications, that perhaps we were pulling out of this recession: not quickly, but slowly and surely moving out of the recession. Now I find that with the new taxes that are coming into effect, people are more reticent to put the money out. In fact, they don't have as much money. We have the companion to this: Income tax increases took effect July 1 of this year where the government will hit people with a double whammy; that is, it's going to try to get the taxes for an entire year in just six months. We will see a substantial amount of money being taken out of the pockets of the consumers of this province, and certainly members of this Legislature fall into that category. Not many people out there watching today are aware that members of provincial Parliament have had their salaries frozen for three years, that in fact the plan is to cut those by a certain percentage and likely freeze them for three more years. I don't expect there's going to be an outpouring of sympathy. I don't expect a lot of letters saying, "Isn't it too bad?" except perhaps some of the members over there, who might write to me and ask what I can do about it.

What I'm pointing out is that if people have less money to spend, there's less of a chance for industry to

get going again. Everybody represents areas that need jobs, but I think of the member for Hamilton East, the Minister of Labour, who's in a city that's been hard hit in these recessionary times: The steel industry, which was so important and remains very important, has faced tremendous competition for a variety of reasons. And those who represent the plastics areas that produce plastics, or lumbering, a variety of industries, find that if people have less money to spend at this time, there's going to be less economic activity.

There is a dilemma for government. To be fair to everybody, there's nobody in this House who understands better than those who sit on the opposition, as well as the government, that there is a need for restraint: that any unnecessary expenditures of government must be either postponed or totally eliminated. But what we're concerned about is that we're going to see so much money taken out of the hands of consumers with this tax and a number of other taxes that the recovery of the economy will be delayed—I hope not killed; I don't think it will be, but it will be delayed. There has been some flicker of hope from south of the border, where for a while our exports were increasing, though I think I noticed some figures that came out yesterday or the day before that said American exports to Canada had increased rather significantly.

Now, I get a face. What's the face for over there? We always get the face on the other side. Every time you say something, there's a face from the member for Middlesex over there. I don't know why you're curling your face up like that.

The Acting Speaker: Order. I want to remind the honourable member to place his comments through the Speaker and it would avoid a lot of confusion.

Mr Bradley: I think you're right, Mr Speaker, and I'll take your advice there.

There is a recognition that if there may be some kind of recovery in the United States, the consumers there may well be in a position to make some purchases which would be of assistance to Canada.

One of the areas where I have some optimism, and I hope there is some considerable optimism, is that our automotive industry may bounce back, because it is exceedingly important. I think everyone recognizes that one job out of every six jobs in this province is related, either directly or indirectly, to the automotive industry. If we could get that industry going again, a lot of the constituencies represented by these members who sit in the House today could see some benefits. Although we've had some closings, and we're quite depressed in our area about some of the closings in the Niagara Peninsula, it would be our hope that we could see some economic activity that would be helpful.

People have to have the money to buy cars, whether they're used cars or new cars, and I have recommended

on many occasions that the Treasurer not only not proceed with this tax but that he eliminate the tax on auto workers, which I refer to as a tax on auto workers because it's a so-called gas guzzler tax. When you examine it carefully, you see its very regressive effect on our economy.

As I've stated on many occasions, we have an opportunity, by removing that tax, of accomplishing two things.

First, we have an improvement because people will likely be prepared to purchase new vehicles and get rid of their old clunkers. We have an opportunity, therefore, to have vehicles out there that have (1) better fuel efficiency and (2) are going to have better pollution abatement equipment on them.

Second, if people are purchasing those cars, it tends to stimulate the economy. In this case, not only are they not going to buy new cars—one of the reasons is that the Treasurer will keep that tax on and people will have less money to spend because of other taxes, but second, because of this particular tax regime, we will find that people won't even have money to spend on used vehicles.

Yet the government has, as I say, proceeded with a number of tax increases which will be extracting money from the economy. I can remember sitting in this House in years gone by when the New Democratic Party has, I think rightly, opposed tax increases which have been proposed by other governments. I admired the stand that members of the Legislature who now sit on the government side took in those days on these particular tax increases, and I wish there would be a revolt among members, the way the member for Lincoln on one occasion stood very bravely and voted against the tobacco tax because he felt it would be detrimental to the farming community in Ontario. I would hope that other members would rise and oppose this particular tax that is going to cost more for people in the province.

We have a tax in addition to this, because we're talking about vehicle taxes, on insurance premiums for automobiles, and we've had Bill 164, the auto insurance bill that has just preceded this in terms of discussion in this House. We have an increase in auto insurance rates that will be directly attributable to the new tax on insurance premiums. Not only do you get it on your household tax at 8%, the premiums on your household belongings and so on, but also the 5% tax on automobile insurance.

So you put all of these together and you find out there's less money out there: less money to spend on tourism, less money to spend on the purchase of vehicles, less money to spend, really, on some of the necessities of life. I know the various large manufacturers are hoping—they keep talking about consumer confidence—that consumer confidence will come back, but it can come back only if there is money in the hands

of these people, if they don't believe that somehow the money's going to be taken out of their hands by the government.

I also look at whether the taxes are to be used for certain reasons. You find that the public tends to look for two things. They look, first of all, to see if they're getting value for their dollar, and if they are, you tend to see a public that will grudgingly accept a tax increase where there's a direct benefit attributable to the province. We don't see many examples of that, but, for instance, if farmers in our province saw that the money was to be utilized to assist them in times of very difficult competition, some of it prompted by the free trade agreement and some by the proposed NAFTA agreement—if they could see the kind of support that governments have promised over the years, they might be able to accept the taxes or the increased fees which are found in this particular bill.

But we don't see that. In the Niagara Peninsula, we do not see that the farmers who were promised conservation easements which would allow them to stay on their land and still be producing various products for the province of Ontario—we don't see that forthcoming. The member for Lincoln, the member for St Catharines-Brock and I would all be aware that the price of cherries is substantially below what it cost to produce those cherries.

You, Mr Speaker, as Agriculture critic for the third party in the House, would recognize that those people have come to you and said that their costs have increased. If they saw a tax increase that could be helping them out, they might be prepared to support it. But they certainly would not see that in this bill.

If, for instance, the government said, "We're not going to proceed with this tax and we're going to cut our advertising budget," they might be happy in that regard, because people think that perhaps some of this money is going to pay for the full-page ads which the government puts in the newspaper on the weekends. I must say that these particular advertisements that I've seen on this occasion are among the most partisan, self-serving ads I've ever seen.

If the Minister of Health puts an ad in the paper and says, "Look, we are removing the following pieces of coverage from you; the following drugs will no longer be covered for seniors," if they're providing that kind of direct information to people, that's hard information that's useful for people to know, and people don't complain about that; the opposition would be on very shaky ground to be able to quarrel with that. If the government is promoting the province of Ontario in terms of tourism, trying to get people here, advertising in the foreign media, for instance, or in other provincial media, one would say, "Well, there may be something productive in that regard." But when it's simply self-serving advertising of the kind we saw last weekend,

what I call the Mulroney advertising—in fact, I don't know whether you've surpassed Mulroney in this, but you've at least equalled him. Because you'd open the mailbox some days and the federal government would have its budget and out would come something from the federal government, and then you get the full page ads on things.

1740

I thought only Mulroney was involved in this because I remember our Premier, when he was in opposition, was a strong opponent of this. He was a person who said this would be a misuse of taxpayers' money, and second, it would be morally and ethically incorrect to do so.

I don't know whether there are any morals or ethics left to talk about in the House because, as I've said in this House on many occasions, I used to count on the NDP to provide that because they used to say all the time that they were ethically and morally above others, and I think they convinced a lot of people in this province. That's why it's most disappointing, not to those who tend to be cynical about all political parties, but to those who are strong supporters of the New Democratic Party, like Michael Davidson who writes in the *Hamilton Spectator* from time to time or Rob Martin who has had articles in various papers.

I would also like to note that there's something else the government spends money on and that is polls, and if money is going from these taxes to pay for polls, I think that people in this province would not be supportive of that. We've seen examples—despite the fact it's been raised in the House, despite the fact that the Premier, in his previous incarnation as leader of the opposition and I'm sure federally as well when he was the official spokesperson in the field of finance in the federal House of Commons—that there was a great opposition to polling: using the taxpayers' dollars to tell the government what the public is thinking so the government can gear its policies to that.

I well recall when the New Democratic Party knew where it stood in every issue, where it didn't have to simply put up a flag to see which way the wind was blowing, a flag in the form of an expensive poll to see which way it was going. So I thought they were going to be different—

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): We know who the experts are in that department.

Mr Bradley: The Minister of Agriculture enters with an interjection, as he did this afternoon, and the point I'd like to make with him is not so much that the government is doing it, but that this was where the NDP was going to be different.

People thought, "Well, they may not be able to run the economy very well," or "We may not agree with

their policies," at least the mainstream of Ontario, "but at least we know that ethically they are going to be above others." I think the greatest disappointment for me is not the way that you've, some would say, botched the running of the economy—I won't be so unkind this afternoon—

Hon Mr Buchanan: The farmers are happy.

Mr Bradley: The farmers are happy, says the Minister of Agriculture and Food. I had some calls at my constituency office this afternoon from cherry farmers who are decidedly unhappy because of the price they're getting for cherries. It's significantly below the price of production, and I'm sure the member for Lincoln, who is in the House this afternoon, would certainly agree with me on that and will be joining me in a fight for the farmers in the Niagara region as he has in the past.

I understand that there's vote taking place in about two minutes, so I will try to wrap up my remarks in this particular case to say that I implore all members of the House to persuade the Premier and to persuade the Minister of Finance, formerly called the Treasurer, to withdraw this tax and other taxes which are punitive to the general population of Ontario and which will have the effect of dampening the economy.

If he were to do so, we in the opposition would rise, I'm sure, in concert to pay tribute to the Premier for making this particular gesture. Being fairminded as we are, I'm sure that he would see that the applause would come from members on all sides of the House.

I believe that the time for this debate as expired and therefore I will—

The Acting Speaker: I just want to remind the member that the time for the debate can go on for 10 more minutes; we do have two votes at 5:55.

Mr Bradley: Ten more minutes. I will be happy to continue then. I appreciate the opportunity then to deal with some of the other issues that are so important to the province on this bill.

If, for instance, the money that is to be derived from this tax were to be used to assist the people in our area, the care givers for Alzheimer's patients, I would be pleased to see that, if they said, "Well, this is what it's going to be used for." But those people have said, "No, we're not getting that additional assistance." People who have Alzheimer's and who have people at home who care for them are going to be more and more on their own, because there are an increasing number of people to serve and the money for it is not increasing. If they said, "We will use this tax money for that purpose and not for polls and not for government advertising," then we might be prepared to be supportive of that. I hope the government has heard this message. I hope they are beginning to see that this need exists.

Or if the money were to be used for hard-to-serve

individuals at home, those who have multiple disabilities, who are at home and require a specialized worker to come in to work with those people, there might be some support for that. If I went to my constituents and said, "That's what they're going to spend the money on. It's not going to be on polls, it's not going to be on advertising, it's not going to be squandered on things—the new WCB building—that aren't necessary. It's going to be placed where it's going to do the most good for vulnerable people in our province," I'm sure we would have some considerable support for that.

I'm sure that in education, where there are special needs that exist that can't be met with the present allocation, if I were to go to the people and say, "Out of this tax that is being announced and put through by this government, these new charges, these new fees, as a result very hard-to-serve children within the school system are going to receive that additional assistance," people might well say, "That's good news."

Or if the people in the Niagara region, for instance, the regional council, who want to have funds available to be able to carry out water and sewer projects were to have that money available from the province as a result of this tax, they might say, "We don't like new taxes, we're generally not in favour of them, but if you're going to have those new taxes and we're going to see the results of those in terms of new construction of facilities to treat sewage and to upgrade sewage treatment plants," I think you might find that there would be some support at the very least for that kind of tax.

Or if you were to say that municipalities are going to be assisted in meeting their various obligations that they're cutting back so drastically on now as a result of this tax, then I think the municipalities would say, "We don't like these taxes, we don't like the new charges that are suggested in this particular bill, but by gosh, if it's going to improve the quality of life, if it's going to allow us to continue essential services to people in our part of the province, then we might be supportive of it."

I hoped that they would do with this bill what they were going to do with the photo radar. I used to see the photo radar tax, as I call it, listed on the sheet for the remaining bills to be considered. That dropped off. I want to compliment the government, because I want to be a fairminded person, for dropping that off the list under pressure from the opposition. I find out that—

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): What about the tire tax?

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): Tire tax.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Mr Bradley: Mr Speaker, would you bring the government benches to order over there?

The Acting Speaker: Yes. The honourable member for St Catharines has the floor very legitimately. Please allow him.

Mr Bradley: Here I am complimenting the government for doing something, for postponing the implementation of that cash cow called photo radar in this province. When they did that, I said that the government House leader shouldn't—

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): Shame on you. It is a safety initiative. Shame.

Mr Bradley: I hear "Shame" coming from the Minister of Transportation, but I know that the government House leader doesn't agree with him, because he has withdrawn the bill.

The Minister of Transportation would see that as a cash cow available so he could derive more money, getting innocent people when in fact the concentration should be on bad drivers on the road who are causing the accidents and not simply a photograph being taken and whoever owns the car being blamed for the speed of that car. That's simply a cash cow.

I want to compliment the government House leader, under pressure from the opposition, on withdrawing that particular bill. The Minister of Agriculture and Food is here, and he would recognize very well on the two-lane highways in his part of the province that it is not very popular when there is a police vehicle sitting there round a bend simply getting innocent people—nobody on the road, a very safe way to be able to be driving—and now they can have photo radar. They don't even have to be there. They simply have the photo radar getting those people. I'm sure he has many constituents, as do all the people in the rural areas of this province, who would be concerned about photo radar.

1750

If the money that's to be derived from this bill were to be used to set up a casino in Windsor, then there may be some people who would say, "I don't want to see this go through." Day after day we have asked questions about the proposed casino, which was something that was never found in the NDP platform. In fact, there was great opposition from the old CCF, the people I admired, and the NDP. They did not want a tax on the poor, they did not want a tax on the vulnerable, and now we see them bringing it forward. I'm wondering if some of the money that's to be derived from this bill will in fact make its way into the construction of a casino for gambling.

I noticed on the weekend, and I wish I had it here today—I don't think I have it in my file—Pierre Berton in the Toronto Star. Pierre Berton is a known supporter over the years, for the most part, of the New Democratic Party. Pierre Berton said in the weekend Toronto Star that casino gambling wasn't the route to go. He was critical of his party on this, the party he has supported.

Mr Hayes: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I know it's not normal for a person to ask someone from the

opposition a question, but maybe the member would be kind enough to tell us what he did with all the money they got from the tire tax that they collected over these years.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Bradley: To continue my attack on casino gambling in Ontario, I suspect there are many people on the government benches who have been silent but don't want to be silent on casino gambling. They read Pierre Berton in the Toronto Star, as I know you did, and you are convinced, I'm sure, if you weren't convinced before, when a person such as Pierre Berton opposes it, that in fact casino gambling will not be good for the province.

I suspect that this government already regrets having gone down the road that it has when we look at the consequences of this. If even a penny to be derived from this tax is to go to help establish casinos in this province, I am sure that New Democrats at the next annual meeting will be there to revolt against the leadership of this party.

The Acting Speaker: I want to remind members that we have about two minutes for questions or comments, at which time the Speaker will have to interrupt to move into a vote mode. Questions or comments?

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I want to say how important the remarks of the honourable member for St Catharines are on this very, very important motion. It is important because he raises the spectre of what casino gambling might do to the province. We know, in fact, that casino gambling is a most abhorrent tax on the poor. We know also that such an initiative is going to be totally destructive of the social fabric in Ontario.

I have to say, from the time that I have spent in this House over the last three years, that when the member for St Catharines rises to speak in this House, all the members of this House must take notice. The issues which he brings are issues of great contention and importance to all members of this House. I want to affirm, if I might, in the few minutes that are given to me, that this issue that he has raised about casino gambling and the possible expansion of gambling in the province is a very negative thing.

I want to also say that his raising of the name Pierre Berton is very significant indeed, because Pierre Berton was a person of great importance to the New Democratic Party. He is a journalist who has been able to put forward proper points of view. He has shown the philosophy of the New Democratic Party over the years in the things that he has written, and I must say that when Pierre Berton speaks about the negativity of casino gambling, he speaks with authority.

I want to affirm that the words he has spoken should

be taken very well by the members of the government, who don't seem to be listening to those people nor those groups or institutions that are against the expansion of gambling in our society.

I would say thank you to the member for St Catharines for his remarks.

The Acting Speaker: Time has now elapsed. When we next debate Bill 32 and Bill 34, the member for St Catharines will have the opportunity to respond if there are any more questions and/or comments.

We now move to an order of the House from last week, to a deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 79. We will first then vote on Bill 164, as was previously agreed; a five-minute bell. We'll call in the members for both votes.

The division bells rang from 1756 to 1801.

INSURANCE STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LES LOIS
CONCERNANT LES ASSURANCES

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 164, An Act to amend the Insurance Act and certain other Acts in respect of Automobile Insurance and other Insurance Matters / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les assurances et certaines autres lois en ce qui concerne l'assurance-automobile et d'autres questions d'assurance.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): As previously agreed earlier this afternoon, we will now be voting on third reading of Bill 164, An Act to amend the Insurance Act and certain other Acts in respect of Automobile Insurance and other Insurance Matters. This bill was moved by Mr Charlton.

All those in favour of Mr Charlton's bill will rise one at a time to be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Akande, Allen, Bisson, Boyd, Buchanan, Charlton, Churley, Cooke, Cooper, Dadamo, Duignan, Ferguson, Fletcher, Frankford, Gigantes, Grier, Haeck, Hampton, Hansen, Harrington, Haslam, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Jamison, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Lankin, Laughren, Lessard;

Mackenzie, MacKinnon, Malkowski, Marchese, Martel, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Pouliot, Rae, Rizzo, Sutherland, Swarbrick, Ward, Wark-Martyn, Waters, Wessinger, White, Wildman, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winninger, Wiseman, Ziemba.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed to Mr Charlton's motion will please rise one at a time and be identified by the Clerk.

Nays

Beer, Bradley, Brown, Carr, Cleary, Conway, Curl-

ing, Drainville, Eddy, Elston, Harnick, Jackson, Johnson (Don Mills), Kormos, McClelland, McLean, Miclash, Morrow, Murdoch (Grey), O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau), Poole, Runciman, Sola, Sterling, Stockwell, Witmer.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes are 61; the nays are 26. I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

We will now ask the sergeant to open the doors for a few moments between votes.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ
EN MATIÈRE D'EMPLOI

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 79, An Act to provide for Employment Equity for Aboriginal People, People with Disabilities, Members of Racial Minorities and Women / Loi prévoyant l'équité en matière d'emploi pour les autochtones, les personnes handicapées, les membres des minorités raciales et les femmes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): We will now proceed to a deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 79, An Act to provide for Employment Equity for Aboriginal People, People with Disabilities, Members of Racial Minorities and Women. This motion was moved by the Honourable Ms Ziemba.

All those in favour of Ms Ziemba's motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Akande, Allen, Bisson, Boyd, Buchanan, Carter, Charlton, Churley, Cooke, Cooper, Dadamo, Duignan,

Ferguson, Fletcher, Frankford, Gigantes, Grier, Haeck, Hampton, Hansen, Harrington, Haslam, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Jamison, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Kormos, Lankin, Laughren, Lessard;

Mackenzie, MacKinnon, Malkowski, Mammoliti, Marchese, Martel, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Morrow, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Pouliot, Rae, Rizzo, Sutherland, Swarbrick, Ward, Wark-Martyn, Waters, Wessenger, White, Wildman, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winninger, Wiseman, Ziemba.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed to Ms Ziemba's motion will please rise one at a time and be identified by the Clerk.

Nays

Beer, Bradley, Brown, Carr, Cleary, Conway, Curling, Eddy, Elston, Harnick, Jackson, Johnson (Don Mills), McClelland, McLean, Miclash, Murdoch (Grey), O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau), Poole, Runciman, Sola, Sterling, Stockwell, Witmer.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes are 65; the nays are 23. I declare the motion carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Justice committee.

The Acting Speaker: The bill shall then be channelled into the justice committee.

It now being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, July 20, at 1:30 pm.

The House adjourned at 1811.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

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Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A.	L	
Beaches-Woodbine	Lankin, Hon/L'hon Frances	ND	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Brampton North/-Nord	McClelland, Carman	L	
Brampton South/-Sud	Callahan, Robert V.	L	
Brant-Haldimand	Eddy, Ron	L	
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Bruce	Elston, Murray J.	L	
Burlington South/-Sud	Jackson, Cameron	PC	
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Cochrane South/-Sud	Bisson, Gilles	ND	
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Downsview	Perruzza, Anthony	ND	
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Durham East/-Est	Mills, Gord	ND	
Durham West/-Ouest	Wiseman, Jim	ND	
Durham-York	O'Connor, Larry	ND	
Eglinton	Poole, Dianne	L	
Elgin	North, Peter	ND	
Essex-Kent	Hayes, Pat	ND	
Essex South/-Sud	Vacant	L	
Etobicoke-Humber	Henderson, D. James	L	
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Grier, Hon/L'hon Ruth A.	ND	Minister of Health / ministre de la Santé
Etobicoke-Rexdale	Philip, Hon/L'hon Ed	ND	Minister of Municipal Affairs / ministre des Affaires municipales
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Fort York	Marchese, Rosario	ND	
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Grey	Murdoch, Bill	PC	
Guelph	Fletcher, Derek	ND	
Halton Centre/-Centre	Sullivan, Barbara	L	
Halton North/-Nord	Duignan, Noel	ND	
Hamilton Centre/-Centre	Christopherson, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services / solliciteur général et ministre des Services correctionnels
Hamilton East/-Est	Mackenzie, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Hamilton Mountain	Charlton, Hon/L'hon Brian	ND	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, government House leader and minister responsible for the automobile insurance review / président du Conseil de gestion, leader parlementaire du gouvernement et ministre délégué à l'Assurance-automobile
Hamilton West/-Ouest	Allen, Hon/L'hon Richard	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère du Développement économique et du Commerce

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
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High Park-Swansea	Ziemba, Hon/L'hon Elaine	ND	Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for human rights, disability issues, seniors' issues and race relations / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre déléguée aux Droits de la personne, aux Affaires des personnes handicapées, aux Affaires des personnes âgées et aux Relations interraciales
Huron	Klopp, Paul	ND	
Kenora	Miclash, Frank	L	
Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles	Wilson, Gary	ND	
Kitchener	Ferguson, Will	Ind	
Kitchener-Wilmot	Cooper, Mike	ND	
Lake Nipigon/Lac-Nipigon	Pouliot, Hon/L'hon Gilles	ND	Minister of Transportation, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Transports, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones
Lambton	MacKinnon, Ellen	ND	
Lanark-Renfrew	Jordan, W. Leo	PC	
Lawrence	Cordiano, Joseph	L	
Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W.	PC	
Lincoln	Hansen, Ron	ND	
London Centre/-Centre	Boyd, Hon/L'hon Marion	ND	Attorney General, minister responsible for women's issues / procureure générale, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
London North/-Nord	Cunningham, Dianne	PC	
London South/-Sud	Winninger, David	ND	
Markham	Cousens, W. Donald	PC	
Middlesex	Mathyssen, Irene	ND	
Mississauga East/-Est	Sola, John	Ind	
Mississauga North/-Nord	Offer, Steven	L	
Mississauga South/-Sud	Marland, Margaret	PC	
Mississauga West/-Ouest	Mahoney, Steven W.	L	
Muskoka-Georgian Bay	Waters, Daniel	ND	
Nepean	Daigeler, Hans	L	
Niagara Falls	Harrington, Margaret H.	ND	
Niagara South/-Sud	Coppen, Hon/L'hon Shirley	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation; chief government whip / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs : whip en chef du gouvernement
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Oshawa	Pilkey, Hon/L'hon Allan	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Municipal Affairs / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Affaires municipales
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Ottawa-Rideau	O'Neill, Yvonne	L	
Ottawa South/-Sud	McGuinty, Dalton J.P.	L	
Ottawa West/-Ouest	Chiarelli, Robert	L	
Oxford	Sutherland, Kimble	ND	
Parkdale	Ruprecht, Tony	L	
Parry Sound	Eves, Ernie	PC	
Perth	Haslam, Karen	ND	
Peterborough	Carter, Jenny	ND	
Port Arthur	Wark-Martyn, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Health / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Santé
Prescott and Russell / Prescott et Russell	Poirier, Jean	L	
Prince Edward-Lennox-South	Johnson, Paul R.	ND	
Hastings/Prince Edward- Lennox-Hastings-Sud			
Quinte	O'Neil, Hugh P.	L	
Rainy River	Hampton, Hon/L'hon Howard	ND	Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Renfrew North/-Nord	Conway, Sean G.	L	

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
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S-D-G & East Grenville / S-D-G et Grenville-Est	Villeneuve, Noble	PC	
St Andrew-St Patrick	Akande, Zanana	ND	Speaker / Président
St Catharines	Bradley, James J.	L	
St Catharines-Brock	Haeck, Christel	ND	
St George-St David	Murphy, Tim	L	
Sarnia	Huget, Bob	ND	
Sault Ste Marie / Sault-Sainte-Marie	Martin, Tony	ND	
Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry	L	
Scarborough Centre/-Centre	Owens, Stephen	ND	
Scarborough East/-Est	Frankford, Robert	ND	
Scarborough-Ellesmere	Warner, Hon/L'hon David	ND	
Scarborough North/-Nord	Curling, Alvin	L	Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation / ministre de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs
Scarborough West/-Ouest	Swarbrick, Hon/L'hon Anne	ND	
Simcoe Centre/-Centre	Wessenger, Paul	ND	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Simcoe East/-Est	McLean, Allan K.	PC	
Simcoe West/-Ouest	Wilson, Jim	PC	
Sudbury	Murdock, Sharon	ND	
Sudbury East/-Est	Martel, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	
Timiskaming	Ramsay, David	L	
Victoria-Haliburton	Drainville, Dennis	Ind	
Waterloo North/-Nord	Witmer, Elizabeth	PC	
Welland-Thorold	Kormos, Peter	ND	
Wellington	Arnott, Ted	PC	
Wentworth East/-Est	Morrow, Mark	ND	Minister of Education and Training, minister responsible for the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / ministre de l'Éducation et de la Formation, ministre responsable du Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main- d'œuvre
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Willowdale	Harnick, Charles	PC	
Wilson Heights	Kwinter, Monte	L	
Windsor-Riverside	Cooke, Hon/L'hon David	ND	
Windsor-Sandwich	Dadamo, George	ND	
Windsor-Walkerville	Lessard, Wayne	ND	
York Centre/-Centre	Sorbara, Gregory S.	L	
York East/-Est	Malkowski, Gary	ND	
York Mills	Turnbull, David	PC	
York North/-Nord	Beer, Charles	L	Premier, President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre, président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires gouvernementales
York South/-Sud	Rae, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	
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Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 20 July 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 20 juillet 1993



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Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

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A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Tuesday 20 July 1993

The House met at 1332.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TOURISM

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): A few weeks ago, amid great fanfare, the government announced a tourism strategy designed to bring tourist dollars into Ontario. While it looked good on paper, the reality in eastern Ontario is far from ideal. The St Lawrence Parks Commission has consistently failed to recognize the partnership that must exist with private enterprise.

Mr Don Besner of Maxville told me that he would like to lease Raisin River Park, since the parks commission decided not to operate it any longer. Other individuals have expressed an interest in running parks that were closed in past years, but have been stonewalled by this government.

Worried that valuable tourism opportunities would be lost and the park would fall into ruin, Mr Besner began to round up community support. Ontario Public Service Employees Union representative Ms Laurie Fish of Brockville told him that the union would rather see a park permanently closed than be operated by a private entrepreneur.

Last Sunday, as I watched, and reports are that, the OPP turned away approximately 1,500 tourists who wanted to use the parks system.

The St Lawrence Parks Commission is missing valuable opportunities to host tourism from all over by refusing to cooperate with business people who want to offer summer employment to students and bolster tourism in these tough economic times. I demand that the minister pursue negotiations to reopen the parks that are now closed by allowing private interests to play a role in their operation.

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): My statement is for the Minister of Health and it concerns Mr Morley Clement of Orillia, who has endured considerable pain and discomfort for the past seven months because of his left hip, which must be replaced.

Dr Hugh Cameron at the Orthopaedic and Arthritic Hospital here in Toronto informed Mr Clement that he does indeed require a hip replacement and a bone graft, but he indicated that the present government has the health care system in such turmoil that he simply does not know when the procedure can take place. Dr Cameron said doctors are now forced to book these delicate operations in 1994 and 1995.

Minister, on July 8 my colleague the member for Simcoe West warned you about the province-wide shortage of orthopaedic surgeons that has resulted in a

crisis in the delivery of emergency health care services. On June 23, I warned you that your Bill 50, the health expenditure control act, will have a negative impact on the ability to provide and receive high-quality medical services.

Do you really expect that people like Morley Clement can get the health care treatment they deserve if this province-wide shortage of orthopaedic surgeons continues and if you are successful in passing Bill 50? Just what do you want me to tell someone like Morley Clement when pain and sleepless nights force him into a wheelchair if he has to wait until 1995 for his hip replacement operation? Minister, what am I to tell him?

SCIENCE NORTH

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): As you know, Mr Speaker, the entire Sudbury region has depended on science for a long time in terms of getting us back to the greenery. One of the places we are very proud we have in the Sudbury region is Science North, the two snowflakes located right on Ramsey Lake. It's a hands-on experience that's developed a worldwide reputation. Countries come to see how it operates so that they can reimplement the system in their own countries. I'm very proud of what they have done and how they represent us.

It is a credit to their staff, to their CEO, Jim Marchbank, and to their board of directors that they have operated within their budget every year of their existence. I commend them for that.

It is with great pride that we are becoming even bigger. Next June 19, on the 10th birthday of Science North, we will open IMAX in Sudbury. It has been announced that the province is giving the city \$3.2 million. Science North will have to pay back \$500,000. As a consequence, we will be an even greater mecca for northern Ontario.

I am very pleased that Science North is making Sudbury even more of a place to visit. I invite everyone to come up next June 19 and see our first show in IMAX and the rocks of Sudbury.

JOBS ONTARIO

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): The Citizens Action Group is a Hamilton agency which has helped more than 35,000 people find jobs over the past 20 years.

On June 4, the executive director of the Citizens Action Group wrote an article in the Hamilton Spectator which was extremely critical of Jobs Ontario. Surprise, surprise: Only one week after this article was published, Minister Dave Cooke pulled the funding from the Citizens Action Group because the ministry said it wasn't cooperative and it didn't meet its targets. I would point out that the minister's briefing notes made

specific reference to the Spectator article when the recommendation was given to terminate funding.

The Citizens Action Group had complained in the Spectator that Jobs Ontario was only after quantity, not quality. To quote their executive director, "The more social assistance recipients we can jam through the turnstiles, the richer we get." He also said that Jobs Ontario is run by "a centralized, bureaucratized, paralysed and neutralized group who call the shots from Queen's Park." His estimate is that 75% to 85% of the people employed through this program are simply replacements, not new jobs.

His criticisms about the lack of proper financial controls are proving out to be all too true, as the Brantford incident has shown.

The ministry may attempt to muzzle this group, but the truth is now out about the NDP's much-ballyhooed Jobs Ontario program: It's an utter failure and a con job.

1340

LANDLORD-TENANT COOPERATION

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I have been monitoring the situation at 1002 Lawrence Avenue East since January 1993. Recently, on a personal inspection of the premises, I saw firsthand that the landlord's harassment continues and poor living conditions still exist.

Consumers' Gas plans to turn off the service tomorrow due to arrears. North York officials are doing everything they can within the existing legislative framework. However, the actions of this apartment owner have demonstrated that existing legislation such as the Planning Act and municipal property standards bylaws take too long.

The tenants of 1002 Lawrence Avenue are pursuing the enforcement of their rights through the means that are currently available to them, but with frustrating results. Municipal authorities need to have the power to deal with these types of situations on an emergency basis. Several municipalities have secured private legislation enabling them to enact a vital services bylaw.

Today, I call on this government's cooperation in bringing forward province-wide legislation to enable all municipalities to enact vital services bylaws.

GIRL GUIDES

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): On Saturday, July 17, I attended the 1993 International Jamboree of the Girl Guides held at Guelph Lake. Over 3,200 Girl Guides and guide leaders from around the world gathered at the camp, which runs from July 12 to 22.

This year's theme is "Living in Harmony—Today's Challenge," and the guides set up a global village of tents, with each section of the camp formed as a continent. In that setting, the guides examined their role in relation to the advancement of girls and women, the

environment, social responsibility and world peace.

The opening ceremonies were on Saturday and the guests included Anne Swarbrick, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation, and Dr Roberta Bondar, the first Canadian woman astronaut. Dr Bondar told the audience that she earned her first wings as a Girl Guide and talked about how the leadership and values she learned in guiding influenced her life. She recalled how she wanted to be a pilot when women weren't allowed to fly.

During their stay at the International Jamboree, the guides are helping with community service projects such as the local food bank, Meals on Wheels and an equestrian camp for children with disabilities.

The only thing marring this event was a sexist cartoon run by the Thomson Guelph Mercury that angered the guides, their leaders and some of the dignitaries. The guides have started a petition against this.

Thank you to the Minister of Culture, Anne Swarbrick, and the previous minister, Ed Philip, for supporting the Girl Guides of Canada. The self-esteem and leadership skills and the sense of responsibility this kind of program provides is so important to young women, given the kinds of challenges and attitudes that they continue to face.

MEMBERS IN HAMILTON-WENTWORTH AREA

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): The Liberal Party of Ontario continues to be concerned about the health and welfare of the people and the economy in the Hamilton-Wentworth area.

There has been for some time an admission, I think, on the part of the six NDP members in that area that they cannot get their act together. Heaven knows that the local officials and council and other people in the area, for economic development reasons, wanted to proceed with the Red Hill Creek Expressway.

My leader, Lyn McLeod, has several times indicated that we are in favour of promoting the value of economic development in the Hamilton-Wentworth region.

I guess that while the cancellation by Bob Mackenzie and others of the Red Hill Creek Expressway on what they described as moral grounds occurred, it has come to our attention, and it probably isn't a big surprise to any of us, that now the members, to detract attention from these grievous errors of economic planning, have turned on each other. Now the member for Wentworth North is attacking the member for Wentworth East in an unmerciful fashion, claiming that he is not carrying out his mandate as a member of the area.

While I would not on my own go into the press and describe the work habits of other colleagues, it seems to me that the member for Wentworth North has taken it upon himself to undermine the activities of the member for Wentworth East and in fact has detracted from his

ability to carry on his duties as a member of the Legislative Assembly.

The Liberal Party regrets that the work in the Hamilton-Wentworth area has been compromised to such an extent and we deplore the attacks personally from one member to the other.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REFORM

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): The Minister of Community and Social Services recently brought forward his government's proposal for social assistance reform in Ontario.

The question on the minds of many of our municipalities today is, where do we fall within this reform? While municipalities are eager to have the social assistance program revamped, they're equally anxious to play a role in this revision.

The municipalities, through the Association of Municipalities in Ontario, are pushing for bilateral discussions with the government in regard to the delivery of services and the funding mechanisms of this proposal. To date, they have not received a response from the minister as to how they will be involved.

Municipalities are not just another lobby group interested in these new welfare proposals; they are the other side of the funding and delivery equation. Joe Mavrinac, the president of AMO, put it succinctly in his statement when responding to the minister's announcement:

"Municipalities are committed to ensuring and improving the economic, social and public health of the communities municipal councils represent. We insist that discussions on who delivers social assistance take place between the two levels of government involved in the provision of services: the province and municipalities."

I would call on the government today to immediately begin bilateral discussions with its municipal partners in order that the delivery and funding arrangements be established before legislation is enacted. For once, have the government negotiate before it legislates.

OSHAWA-WHITBY FAIR

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): July 22 through 25 marks the dates of the 16th annual Oshawa-Whitby Fair, and we're all invited.

I say the 16th annual, but in fact it was started some 130 years ago as an agricultural fair, where friends and neighbours paused between the spring planting and the fall harvest to socialize and to relax.

Sponsored by the South Ontario Agricultural Society, you can still see its rural roots in the antique buggy and cutter display, the saddle and heavy horse shows, the horse pull and the oxen rides, as well as the horticultural exhibits. But you don't want to miss the giant truck pull, the monster mud bog or the demolition derby, and personally, I'm looking forward to seeing my

friend Gord Mills perform in the laser karaoke night.

The Oshawa-Whitby Fair draws people from all of southern Ontario to its midway rides, to its baby show, to its pet contests. It's truly a show that has something for everyone. I have enjoyed myself many times at this event over the years. The camaraderie and geniality is contagious, as you'll see when you stroll through the grounds. It's reminiscent of the fairs of our forefathers. It also gives us the best from the exhibitions of today.

I hope to see many of my colleagues from Oshawa, Whitby, from all of Durham region and all of Ontario at the Oshawa-Whitby Fair.

1350

ORAL QUESTIONS

OMA AGREEMENT

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): My first question is to the Minister of Health. I think all members of this assembly remember well the day in April 1991 when your government concluded a framework agreement with the Ontario Medical Association which the Premier himself said was a landmark achievement, an historic first for the province of Ontario, and there was his expectation and that of the government that this would begin a new day of collective bargaining as between the government and the Ontario medical profession. That landmark agreement was signed a little over two years ago.

Yesterday, as part of that process, we had a finding from an Ontario Labour Relations Board umpire, M.G. Mitchnick, a finding which essentially says that the Ontario Ministry of Health in the Rae government has been guilty of bad-faith bargaining with the Ontario Medical Association.

My question to the Health minister in this labour government, having regard to this landmark agreement that was to have initiated a new day in government/medical association relations, is: How did this happen? How in Bob Rae's Ontario have we come to a point where his own government, a social democratic or labour government, has been found to have bargained in bad faith under the umbrella of this historic landmark agreement that was touted just two years ago?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Let me respond to the member by saying that I find it regrettable that the Ontario Medical Association in its press release with respect to what was an interim finding by an umpire chose to interpret it as being a finding of bad faith.

Let me say to the member, who I'm sure has read the entire interim report of the umpire, that the quote that is used in the press release, which clearly says, "Let me acknowledge that the government has been remiss in not being at the bargaining table with the OMA," goes on to say, "Remiss to the present time," and then goes on to say that in response to his queries the government

has expressed the availability and willingness of the bargaining team to meet on an immediate and continuing basis with the bargaining team of the OMA.

I'm delighted to be able to say to the member that this is in fact already happening, had happened prior to the issuance of the umpire's interim report, and that intense and active negotiations with the OMA are under way and I am optimistic will lead to a renewal of what, I agree with him, was in fact a landmark agreement in 1991.

Mr Conway: In my supplementary to the minister, and I want to be as polite as I can be. She is being disingenuous and incomplete in that response, because I have read Mr Mitchnick's judgement, and his fundamental accusation is not that the government has not been at the table, though he does touch on that subject. The fundamental charge that he lays at the Bob Rae government's door, and the basis for his charge that you've bargained in bad faith, is that you have not put all issues on the table. That's the fundamental concern that the arbitrator has found, and the decision on page 3 is very clear about that.

So my question is this: It's one thing for an NDP government to turn its back on its commitments around auto insurance, Sunday shopping and casino gambling, but we've now come to this. We've got a finding of bad-faith bargaining on behalf of the Rae government because it not only would not come to the table with the doctors but it refused systematically to put all issues on the table.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member place his question, please.

Mr Conway: My supplementary is, have you given direction to your negotiators to comply with Mr Mitchnick's directive that you're not only to be at the table but that all issues of compensation, inside and outside of the social contract, will be put on the table forthwith?

Hon Mrs Grier: The honourable member calls me disingenuous and my answer incomplete. I would remark to him that in fact there have been frequent occasions, if not today, when the same words could be used about him, but I'm not here to exchange those kinds of comments. I'm here to say to him yet again that it was not that the issues were not before both the OMA and ourselves; there were a number of tables, and I think what the umpire found—an issue on which both the OMA and our own negotiators had already come to a conclusion—was that it was important and more useful that all of the issues with respect to compensation of physicians be put on the one table.

So a single table with a number of task forces is now what is addressing these issues and negotiating a contract. That is what is happening, and because of the social contract, we had wanted to conclude negotiations on the social contract before getting back to the negoti-

ations with the OMA.

As I say, we had all come to the conclusion, subsequent to June 4, that it was preferable to have all of the issues dealt with at a single table. The umpire has confirmed that this was the appropriate direction, and that's the table that I hope will come to a conclusion.

Mr Conway: Mr Mitchnick in his finding, a finding that your department in your labour government was guilty of bad-faith bargaining because you not only wouldn't come to the table but, more importantly, when you got to the table you systematically refused to put all of the issues on the table—I will read, if it makes it easier for you, Madam Minister, that particular point.

He says, and I read directly from his judgement of yesterday, "I agree with the OMA that all aspects of the government's proposals with respect to compensation must be placed on the negotiating table at the same time—whether or not the source of any of those aspects is the government's 'social contract' initiative, or its 'expenditure control plan,' or any other fiscal initiative which may form the backdrop to the current round of talks."

He indicates further that he expects that you will comply with that directive.

My final supplementary is, have you given your negotiators a clear mandate to comply with this directive? Because to date they have not done so and that's why you have been found to have been bargaining in bad faith, which must be an excruciatingly embarrassing charge for all of you people in Bob Rae's new democracy.

Hon Mrs Grier: It's an interim report, and I deny that the conclusion was bad-faith bargaining. I agree with the member that the conclusion was to confirm the conclusion that both the ministry and the OMA negotiators had come to: that it was appropriate that all of the issues dealing with the compensation of physicians be on the table at the same time. That is what is now happening. My negotiators have the authority to deal with all of those issues at the table with the OMA, and I assume that the OMA negotiators have the same direction from their directors, and that is where the issues will be resolved; end of question.

Mr Conway: The policy seems to be, it's all right to bargain in bad faith on an interim basis. Boy, have we come to that?

The Speaker: And your second question?

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): My second question is to the Minister of Finance, and it takes up a dialogue he and I had a week ago today as to where Hydro stood in respect of the social contract obligations. The press of course today is replete with stories that there exists a tentative agreement as between Hydro and certain of its unions in respect of these matters.

My question is not to the Minister of Environment and Energy but rather to the Minister of Finance, because it's a social contract question, specifically this: Has the Minister of Finance seen and approved the tentative agreement at Hydro in respect of the social contract question?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): In view of the fact that the member for Renfrew North in his preamble referred to the negotiations with the OMA and the Minister of Health, I intend to include some of that in my response to him. For him to imply that the Minister of Health would indicate that bargaining in bad faith on an interim basis is appropriate is completely misleading, and I would hope that he would withdraw that.

Mr Speaker, I can see you looking—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I know that the honourable member would not suggest that another member is going to be misleading anyone, and perhaps it would be appropriate to rephrase his thought.

Hon Mr Laughren: Of course, Mr Speaker. The words just slipped out, and I withdraw them. It was the way in which the member accused the Minister of Health of something that she did not say that would lead people to certain conclusions that were inappropriate and unfair.

Now, what was the question?

Mr Conway: I have a lot of sympathy for these New Democrats, because this must be a painful day to face this kind of charge. For the party of Stephen Lewis and Ian Deans and Elie Martel and Donald MacDonald, in government, to be found guilty of bad-faith bargaining on so sensitive and timely a question must hurt indeed.

The Speaker: And the supplementary on your original question?

Mr Conway: My question to the Finance minister—

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs): That's collective bargaining.

Mr Conway: Well, you know, we find that whether it's collective bargaining or auto insurance or common pause days or other issues, these socialist saints are sinning at every turn.

Let me say to the minister, have you seen and have you approved the Hydro deal in respect of the social contract matter?

1400

Hon Mr Laughren: Concerning the member for Renfrew North's continuing tirade against the negotiations with the OMA, I would simply say to the member for Renfrew North that the Minister of Health gave an appropriate response and that his conclusions have nothing to do with the facts.

In terms of this government's refusal to implement public auto insurance, which he asked me about in his question, I gather, I can tell him that this government has done what it can do under very, very difficult fiscal circumstances. Those fiscal circumstances, I might add, are at least partly the result of the mismanagement of the economy by his government when it was in office for five years.

To deal specifically, if you'll allow me, Mr Speaker, with the question of the Ontario Hydro tentative agreement—and I hope the member will discipline himself and stick to his question and not allow himself to be diverted with all these other matters, I say in a very friendly way.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): That's a lecture.

Hon Mr Laughren: No, that's not a lecture at all. I'm just trying to give the member for Renfrew North some friendly advice. No, I have not signed such a sectoral agreement.

Mr Conway: That is a helpful and final recognition of my questions in this regard, because I have in my possession information from both the Hydro corporation and some of the unions. These reports seem to confirm the following: that Maurice Strong and Sid Ryan have in fact won the day, that Hydro will be spared virtually any target, will be exempt from virtually all of the initial \$100-million targets. Both management and the employees are now agreed that in fact some \$80 million of the savings, so-called, will stay with Hydro and the other \$20 million is going to go to a number of unspecified spending programs.

My questions are the following—

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): A brown envelope.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): That's what you asked for.

Mr Conway: Listen, this is the government's plan. We have a deal that appears to be no deal at all, because Hydro is going to be exempt, virtually, from any of the provisions of the social contract on the grounds that it has its own restructuring plan. I understand that.

My question to the Minister of Finance is this: In your original target you said that of the \$2 billion worth of savings, Hydro would pony up \$100 million. You are now going to presumably accept that you are going to lose at least \$80 million of that. How and where are you going to make up that \$80 million?

Secondly, are you prepared to entertain special cases, whether it's from the city of Hamilton, where the Premier has said that he feels that certain of those municipalities have made a significant contribution?

The Speaker: Could the member conclude his question, please.

Mr Conway: Are you prepared to accept a submission from the city of Hamilton or any other group in the province which can argue a similar set of special circumstances, as you appear to be willing to accept on the Hydro matter?

Hon Mr Laughren: It is really interesting that, I guess it was last week, the member for Renfrew North was on his feet urging that we couldn't possibly impose the social contract and \$100 million of savings on Ontario Hydro, given what it'd already been going through and given its fiscal situation. Now, today, he's on his feet wondering how we could possibly exclude them from the social contract exercise. Here we have the Liberal Party once again walking down both sides of the same street at the same time. I don't know how they can do it, but day after day in this Legislature, the Liberal Party of this province is for ever contradicting itself, tripping over its own contradictions.

I can tell the member for Renfrew North that there has been a tentative agreement reached with the government negotiators and Ontario Hydro and the employees at Ontario Hydro, which is a CUPE-represented facility. I have not, however, read fully the agreement or signed it off as a sectoral agreement.

I do understand, however, that—

Mr Elston: Are you apt to turn it down? Did you bargain in good faith with them? Did you?

Hon Mr Laughren: I'll let the member for Bruce—

The Speaker: Order.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Laughren: If you don't want an answer—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Had the minister concluded his response?

New question, third party.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): It's a nice segue here actually, because I have a question to the Treasurer. I happen to have a copy of the proposed memorandum of understanding on the social contract, the plan for the municipal electric utility subsector. I was lucky enough to get my hands on this and I've been lucky enough in the last couple of hours to have a good read. To suggest that this is chock full of information would be a grandiose overstatement.

I will say to the Treasurer, by way of a question, that in this particular document, which I was lucky enough to get hold of—since you haven't had time to read it, maybe I'll forward you a copy and you can have a good look—in this copy of an agreement between the parties, do you realize there is not one specific financial target, there's not one quantifiable saving, there's not one actual deadline that anyone has to meet? So in essence, we have roughly 20 pages of blather, chit-chat and talk; not a dollar sign, not a nickel, not a cost of how much

can be saved by implementing this particular contract.

Maybe you'd like to comment on that, because it seems to me this document is very, very, very short on specifics.

Hon Mr Laughren: I think the member for Etobicoke West is referring to the municipal utilities subsector of the municipal sector. In fact, there is, as I recall, \$20 million in savings within that sector. I know the member for Etobicoke West and the rest of his caucus want the reductions to be much more severe than that and they want expenditure reductions to be much tougher than we are engaging in, the \$2 billion. They want much more than that. But I think the \$20-million savings that will be achieved through the municipal utilities sector is appropriate and, quite frankly, quite fair.

Mr Stockwell: I guess I wasn't clear enough in the question. The question was not the \$20 million. We've all heard that figure bandied about. The question is, there are no specifics, there are no deadlines, there are no cost savings, there are no targets, there are no savings. It's just a bunch of words, Mr Finance Minister. There are no targets of any sort in this document.

The agreement's been cut and made. What I understand the government's position to be is, "We'll let the local hydro suppliers work on the savings." There are hundreds of local hydro suppliers. What are you going to do, audit every single one of them to ensure they're meeting the plan? Are you going to audit every local municipality? Are you going to audit every school board? You'd be caught up in thousands and thousands and thousands of audits.

You suggest there is \$20 million in savings. The only term that could possibly be seen in here as a savings is that you talk about okaying layoffs. That's the only term in here that can be seen as a savings. Please tell me where in this document you can quantify \$20 million in savings.

Hon Mr Laughren: The Social Contract Act is a public compensation document. The municipal utilities are a subsector of the municipal sector. The utilities have been given the target of \$20 million. The member talks about there being no numbers and no dates. The number is \$20 million. The date is for each year of the next three years, that is their targeted savings. So I'm not sure what the member for Etobicoke West is after more than that. It is a voluntary agreement and has been designated as such by me. That's the way the Social Contract Act is written, and the savings of \$20 million will be achieved by that particular subsector.

Mr Stockwell: First of all, nobody is under the impression that you've designated this particular contract. You say you've designated it, and those people who are involved in these negotiations don't think you've designated it.

1410

Secondly, how are you going to quantify your \$20 million in savings? You've got hundreds of local utilities out there who operate. You're saying, "Go ahead and save money." How are they going to quantifiably save their money? Who's going to measure the savings? You're saying you want \$20 million out of these people. They haven't agreed to any terms and conditions that nail down how they're going to save the money. You've given them no deadlines by which they have to save it. You've given them no quantifiable number, other than the \$20 million in a gross package.

The only way that they can save money, according to this particular framework, excluding everything else, the only way you talk about saving money in here is through layoffs. Explain to me how local utilities, through your pay pause day, which isn't even spoken about in this particular agreement, through all the rollbacks that we haven't even spoken about in this agreement, are going to go about saving money through this particular agreement, because everything you talked about in the previous four months isn't even mentioned in this particular contractual agreement.

Hon Mr Laughren: Perhaps I should clarify what the process is. When a subsectoral agreement is reached between the parties, then the negotiators for the government bring such a sectoral agreement to me for designation, and that's what I am in the process of doing almost as we speak, deciding. I think I said I designated it, and in fact I don't think I have. I have not actually designated that subsector, so I correct myself in that regard. The member is quite right.

But for the member to imply that because every t is not crossed and every i dotted in the subsectoral agreement on municipal utilities doesn't mean that those—they've been given their target of \$20 million. That must be achieved. They've been given the dates by which those savings must be achieved. That is the number and those are the dates during which those compensation savings in that subsector must be achieved. There's nothing mysterious about that. That's the way all of the agreements are going to be written.

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF EASTERN ONTARIO

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I have a question to the Minister of Health. The Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario is currently in a severe financial problem. The problem relates to losses in revenue from treating children who normally come from Quebec across into Ontario for treatment.

Historically, 80% of CHEO's budget comes from Ontario patients and 20% from Quebec. The province of Quebec has now implemented a repatriation program, taking most of its children back over into Quebec hospitals, and this repatriation has cost CHEO 13% of its revenue, somewhere around \$10 million a year. Because of cutbacks in terms of treating these patients,

they are left with a net shortfall of \$5.5 million per year, or they're losing \$15,000 per day.

As you know, this hospital has undertaken a very extensive review of its operations. They had a consultant's report on their operations which said that they were exemplary in terms of their utilization rate, in terms of their efficiencies and other kinds of things. I know your ministry doesn't like that, and when confronted with this, your ministry is saying that in addition to all of the other kinds of contributions they must come up with, they must come up with \$2.5 million.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Sterling: The president of the hospital is very, very concerned that your regional director has stated, and I'm paraphrasing his words, "Any fool can find a \$2.5-million reduction from a budget that size." Do you believe that this is a legitimate response from your official to the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Let me start by saying to the member that I'm well aware of the situation that the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario and the Ottawa General Hospital find themselves in as a result of loss of revenue because patients in the province of Quebec are no longer going to those hospitals. As a result of that shortfall in revenue, there has been an extensive review. That review was completed just last month, in June, and is currently under examination by officials within the ministry.

Let me assure him that the comment he quoted—if it was made, I agree with him—was at this point inappropriate because no conclusion has been reached with respect to how to deal with this funding shortfall. But I would remind him that in order to help the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, we have advanced \$1.4 million to its operating funding. They're the only hospital in the province that was given that extra funding this year, precisely because we want to help them deal with the problem that has arisen.

Mr Sterling: You've given them the money because they can't meet their payroll. The problem is that they would have to close their doors today if you didn't forward that money, and it's a stopgap measure which you have been undertaking over the past two or three years as this problem has developed.

The 7% of the revenues which CHEO is now receiving from the province of Quebec will shrink further, because last week the Quebec government stepped up its efforts to repatriate the children over to their province.

In addition, the cases that are being left with CHEO are the most difficult cases. Typically, in one year there are 26 open-heart surgeries done at CHEO on babies or children from the province of Quebec. This costs the Ontario taxpayer, or the hospital in effect, \$22,000 per

patient. The province of Quebec is paying \$7,000 per patient. The total loss to CHEO is something like \$400,000 a year.

Now, you know, Madam Minister, that I have stated in this House that I'm quite willing to say to Quebec construction workers, "You can't come into Ontario unless you have equal access," but I'm not willing to say no to parents of sick Quebec children, "You can't come to CHEO in order to have your baby treated."

What are you doing to protect the children of eastern Ontario and the Ontario taxpayer from this abuse?

Hon Mrs Grier: Let me say to the member that I am well aware of the excellent services provided by CHEO, and the ministry's objective is to work with CHEO to resolve the budget differences that have been identified by the consultants' report. He's quite correct that the consultants believe there could be some savings; the hospital says there couldn't. That's being worked on. We have a draft report from the consultants at this point. It's being reviewed by the ministry and a final report is anticipated next month. When we have that final report, then I hope we'll be able to work with the hospital and negotiate a long-term solution.

Mr Sterling: I tend to differ with your interpretation of what the hospital interprets from the consultants' report as to what they can do to save money and what your ministry interprets from the consultants' report and the response. In fact, in a very angry response to your senior assistant deputy minister, there were several allegations made by your senior deputy minister which were confronted in the report with regard to utilization, with regard to lengths of stay etc, where the consultants' report does not agree with your senior deputy minister.

I spoke to the president of CHEO this morning, Garry Cardiff, and he is very, very concerned about this situation and the fact that your government is not seeking in good faith a permanent solution to this problem. He is so concerned that he is—and there is speculation in the Ottawa community that this hospital, in part or in total, could in fact have to close its doors in three to four months' time.

The board is totally fed up with this government and is ready to hand over the keys to the province of Ontario if a solution is not found. Madam Minister, what steps are you going to take to make certain that the children of eastern Ontario are properly taken care of in this fine institution, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario?

Hon Mrs Grier: I have to say that I think the member is a little unfair in the conclusions that he draws from what has happened. The ministry is fully aware of the shortfall in funding from CHEO. The ministry appointed consultants to review the operations of CHEO and to make some recommendations to it. In addition, the ministry has been discussing with the

province of Quebec the change in its policy and whether there is any ongoing revenue or how its patients are dealt with.

Having received a draft report from the consultant, the ministry is meeting with officials from the hospital, and let me say to him again, as I said a moment ago, we expect to have a final report from the consultants in August and at that point we will know what direction to go in. But to suggest and to raise the alarm that this will mean the closure or the lack of service to the parents and children in eastern Ontario is not in fact the case and I think is premature at this point.

1420

APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): My question is to the Chair of Management Board, whose responsibility in government is the Ontario public service, and it concerns the social contract.

Somebody once said all politics is local and it's best to understand policy and these issues at a very local level. So I just want to talk a little bit about the social contract as it relates to the public service because Michael Decter, a deputy minister paid \$135,000 approximately, is out there telling all of us in the province, and particularly everybody in the public service, that this is all about shared sacrifice, that we all have to pull in our belts and take a little bit less.

This involves hundreds and thousands of public servants, many of whom are at a senior level and many of whom have worked for the Ontario government for years and decades. I have now learned that in the very last few days the government of Ontario has appointed Michael Decter's wife, Ms Lucille Rock, as an assistant deputy minister in the Ministry of Community and Social Services at an estimated salary of \$110,000 a year.

My question to the Chair of Management Board is: What kind of signal does this send to the men and women of the Ontario public service who are being told by Michael Decter and Bob Rae on the one hand that theirs must be a shared sacrifice, when on the other they now learn that Michael Decter's wife has just landed a plum job in the Ontario public service, a service that she has joined within the last six to eight months?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): First of all, the member should know that his comments are not entirely correct. The individual in question has been a member at an ADM level in cabinet office since 1991. It's not, as he would imply, a new plum thrown to someone out there as some kind of a reward. She in fact has worked in the civil service of this province and I would assume, although I didn't do the interviews myself, earned the position for which she was hired.

Mr Conway: That's very useful and helpful infor-

mation, because she has just been appointed as an ADM at Community and Social Services. She came not that long ago. I didn't realize that she was brought in from Manitoba at that level. In fact, in my view, that even strengthens my case.

The Rae government has appointed its campaign manager as secretary of the cabinet. It brought in a bare-knuckled partisan like Jeff Rose to run a purely political operation as Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. We've now got these two Manitobans in this public service, whereas hundreds and thousands of Ontarians are being shown the door as part of the shared sacrifice.

Now these people, whom I represent and whom we all represent, are being asked to accept that the Decter household, which is going to have over a quarter of a million dollars worth of public money, is somehow in a position to tell the rest of us about shared sacrifice.

What kind of signal is this and what kind of judgement is it, because, I've got to tell you, there's one household in this province where the wolf is not going to be making much progress, and there are a lot of people who would see Michael Decter—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Will the member complete his question, please.

Mr Conway: —in a real conflict of interest.

Hon Mr Charlton: Again, the member for Renfrew North has tripped over his own facts and his own tongue. The individual in question to whom the member refers is not from Manitoba. She happens to be from Montreal.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Conway: Mr Speaker, on a point of privilege: To correct my record—

The Speaker: When the House has come to order.

Mr Conway: On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: Just to correct my record, let me be clear then, I apologize for not understanding that this is a family compact of New Democrats based in Winnipeg and Montreal.

Hon Mr Charlton: I guess I should just simply wrap up my comments by suggesting that with the eloquence with which the member displays his competence, his ability to call into question the competence of anyone else, I think, is very questionable.

The Speaker: New question. The member for Markham.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Markham has the floor.

Mr Conway: You're putting Ontario women out of work to bring in your New Democrat friends from out of the province. That's what you're doing.

The Speaker: Would the member for Renfrew North please take his seat.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): New Democrats first, everybody else last.

The Speaker: Would the member for Bruce take his seat. The member for Bruce is out of order.

Mr Conway: Do you want a list of people who have been shown the door?

The Speaker: Would the member for Renfrew North please come to order.

The member for Markham was waiting patiently to ask his question and he now has the floor.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): The people who aren't patient are the taxpayers in the province of Ontario.

TAXATION

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): The question is for the Minister of Finance. The question is about taxes and taxes and more taxes and how your government has, in the short time it has been in power, raised some 32 different taxes on the people of Ontario. The Liberals before they were kicked out of office had 33 tax increases in their lifetime. Now your recent budget has robbed us of \$2 billion in more taxes.

So many taxes means that the Ontario family spent the first 200 days of 1993 working to pay for the cost of all levels of government, and having suffered the blows of government taxation, today marks the first day when Ontarians start working for themselves, having paid for the deficit and all levels of government. People can now take home a paycheque with no government strings attached.

The auspicious day is called tax freedom day, but it's hardly a day for celebration. In 1984, some 10 years ago, tax freedom day fell on July 5; today it's July 20, and each year tax freedom day moves closer and closer to the end of the year.

My question for you, Mr Minister of Finance: Now that you're in government, do you have a different position on tax freedom day than when you were in opposition?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): The member for Markham, not for the first time, has raised the question of taxes in this province. I would simply say to the member for Markham that the taxes people pay in this province deliver the services the people in this province want and I think have a right to receive.

I understand that he would wish that taxes would be lower and that services that people receive would be lower. I would assume as well that he would lower the standard of education, of public services, of health care, in order that we could all pay lower taxes. That's fine to say, it's an admirable statement of principle, but I can tell the member for Markham that I believe we have

a tax system that's the fairest in all of Canada and that delivers the essential services that people in this province want.

1430

Mr Cousens: The people of Ontario look forward to the day, two years from now when you're out of office, to hear what your answer's going to be on taxes, because you had a different tune a few years ago before you became the government. Now that you're there, I'll tell you, the people in the province are frustrated, they're angry and they don't know what to do in the remaining two years that you're in office.

This morning our leader, Mr Harris, and people were out there telling people about tax freedom day. Commuters coming into Toronto were angry, genuinely angry at the fact that it's only today that they start making money for themselves. You've forgotten what you said and thought when you were in opposition. Now that you're in government, quite a different tune comes forward.

We asked you again and again, and the question is on the minds of everybody in our province, when will you stop the tax madness and commit yourself to structural reform of the government system and start to eliminate the millions of dollars of waste in the system that we see going on today?

Hon Mr Laughren: The message of this government has not changed. We said when we were in opposition that we wanted a system of taxation that was fairer than the Liberals or the Tories had. We said that in opposition and we are doing something about it.

Since we formed the government, we have taken over 200,000 low-income people off the tax rolls in this province. Secondly, we have imposed a high-income surtax on the people who have the most ability to pay in this province. That, to me, is tax fairness as well. Thirdly, we have appointed a Fair Tax Commission that will be reporting this year. It's on target, it's on budget and it will be making its final report this year.

I would say to the member for Markham that he's got a lot of nerve complaining about the taxation policy of this government when his government, in the 1981 and 1982 budgets, raised the provincial income tax by four points. My friend, count them, four points in 1981 and 1982.

TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): This government, in its speech from the throne and its subsequent budget, announced a program to put Ontario back to work. My question today is for the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation.

In my community a promise was made not too long ago with respect to the very valuable tourist industry that we depend on to create work and generate a lot of wealth and opportunity for people. The tourist informa-

tion centre that we have there was proposed to be replaced with a new facility. With the present situation and the government's attempt to try to manage its finances, I was wondering if you might give us a status report on that particular project today.

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I know the member for Sault Ste Marie to be a tireless worker in advocating on behalf of the needs of his community. I am quite happy to be able to tell him that in response to the advocacy he's done to my ministry to point out the needs of the tourism industry in Sault Ste Marie, the fact that it has the busiest travel information centre in all of Ontario and yet had terrible difficulties with the location and the accessibility of it, as a result of his work and drawing that to our ministry's attention, we are happy to be able to point out that the tender was awarded on June 30 to Chamberlain Construction in the amount of \$1.25 million.

Chamberlain Construction has agreed with the request from our government to commit to the purchasing of local materials for the development of that travel information centre, as well as to hiring local labour to construct that travel information centre.

Mr Martin: I am certainly relieved, Minister, by that statement. The fact that this centre is going to go ahead will create a lot of work for some of the people in my community who presently are looking for work, and will help as we try to develop further the attractions for tourists to Sault Ste Marie and indeed Algoma.

I was wondering if you might be more specific on the exact location of the new facility and what the time lines are. When will it start, and when do you expect that it will be finished?

Hon Ms Swarbrick: There'll be 24 jobs created by the Jobs Ontario Capital fund to build that travel information centre. Construction is expected to begin in August of this year, with the completion date expected to be February 1994. The centre will be located at the southeast corner of Huron and Queen streets, one block south of the present location. In fact, the location will be highly visible from the International Bridge. The traffic flow will now be ideal, which had been a terrible problem at the present centre, and the travel information centre will be fully accessible to disabled persons.

OMA AGREEMENT

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): My question is to the Minister of Health. I have in my hand a brochure that was released by the chairman of the New Democratic Party caucus, which includes information paid for by taxpayer dollars and distributed to every constituent in his riding. Additionally, because of the nature of this brochure, I assume that it is being sent by other New Democratic Party members to their constituents.

It claims that, "This government is protecting essential services that you value." It says here, "We're negotiating with doctors to control the costs of their services and to ensure services to communities where doctors are needed."

In fact we know, as of today, that the government is being charged with bad-faith bargaining with the doctors. While the Minister of Health in an answer to my colleague the member for Renfrew indicated that the bad-faith bargaining was only on an interim basis, I point out to her that the referee in the decision says, "The OMA framework and interim agreement on economic arrangements would appear to survive the legislation"—that means the social contract legislation—"and I find that the contractual provisions relating to that process must therefore be adhered to."

The government has, before this House, indicated that negotiations are continuing. The mediator, the umpire, has provided the government with specific directions with respect to complying with good-faith bargaining.

I want to know from the minister specifically what new initiatives, what new, clear mandates she has put on the table with her negotiators. Will she change her negotiators and put a new team into place, or what other steps has she taken in this area?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Let me assure the member that the team that has been negotiating with the Ontario Medical Association since the start of negotiations earlier this spring is continuing, is in place, and I have every confidence that it will in fact bring to conclusion a successful renegotiation of our agreement with the OMA.

The directions that they have been given are likewise unchanged, which are to negotiate with the OMA with respect to its fee schedule and the issues under the expenditure control program of the ministry, and to do that because we believe that if we are in fact to maintain and sustain the health system of this province—a health system that I know is very important not only to the members of this House but to all the people of the province—we have to manage it better and we have to control its costs. We do that by negotiating with the various partners and players, and we are now doing that with the OMA.

Mrs Sullivan: I want to reiterate that the brochure indicates that the government didn't introduce user fees or cut services, as other provinces have done. The brochure indicates, once again, negotiations "with doctors to control the costs of their services and to ensure services to communities where doctors are needed."

I point out that the government has introduced user fees to seniors on the drug plan. They've increased user fees by 32% to residents of nursing homes. They're introducing user fees to psychiatric patients in Ontario's

hospitals. That is only the first step, because they're delisting services that are now covered under medicare.

Also, I quote the referee, who says that the government has reappropriated to itself by legislation the power to unilaterally determine the issues of the compensation. The truth is that doctors' services are not available in many communities, as the government claims. Hornepayne, Armstrong, Barry's Bay, Mount Forest, Geraldton, Rainy River and Moosonee have neither the doctors they need nor the hospital emergency services they need.

1440

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): And the question?

Mrs Sullivan: The truth is that the statements in this brochure are lies. I'm asking the Minister of Health, if she is going to talk the talk, when is she going to walk the walk?

The Speaker: The member for Halton Centre knows well that that's not appropriate language in the chamber. I ask the member to simply withdraw the remark and to place her question.

Mrs Sullivan: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: What I said to this House was that the statements made in this brochure are lies. That is perfectly appropriate and in order.

The Speaker: To the member, while she is not making a direct accusation of another member lying, at the same time it is not language which is appropriate. There is, of course, a difference of opinion that appears to be quite evident. I would ask the member, in an effort to maintain proper decorum in this chamber, that she simply withdraw that remark and place the question which I know she wishes to ask of the Minister of Health.

Mrs Sullivan: Mr Speaker, once again, I carefully considered my words. I indicated that the statements in this brochure are lies. If that is offensive to you and—

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs): Out. Don't back down, Barbara.

Mrs Sullivan: Mr Speaker, I point out to you that the statements that are made and the actions that are taken by the government are not one and the same. I am asking the minister again, if she and members of the New Democratic Party and her government are going to talk the talk, when are they going to start walking the walk?

The Speaker: Minister?

Hon Mr Pouliot: You're letting her off the hook.

The Speaker: The member for Nipigon—

Hon Mr Pouliot: Talk to me about decorum. She is off the hook. She is not withdrawing.

The Speaker: I realize there were some extraneous

sounds on this side of the chamber. The member withdrew the remark.

Hon Mrs Grier: I have said in this House today, I think three times, that negotiations are proceeding with the Ontario Medical Association. They are proceeding actively and intensively, and I expect them to be concluded within the next 10 days. The appropriate place to have those negotiations is at that table. I'm not going to negotiate them in public with the member opposite—particularly with the member opposite.

PARAMEDIC SERVICES

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I have another question for the Minister of Health. One of the differences between an ambulance driver and a paramedic is that a paramedic can revive a patient who has suffered a heart attack. In 1991, 342 patients suffered cardiac arrests in the Ottawa-Carleton area and only eight lived, out of those 342. In the cities where paramedics have the ability to apply electric shock to restore normal heartbeat, they have a success rate of around 30%, which would indicate that of these 342 patients, some 100 would have lived. Could you tell me why the city of Ottawa does not have paramedic services for the population of Ottawa-Carleton?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm certainly aware that a drive has been begun in the region of Ottawa-Carleton, led, I think, by the member for Ottawa South, to increase the number of paramedics who are available in Ottawa. As I have to say to the member and to the member for Ottawa South, there is some controversy as to whether the extension of paramedic services is the most appropriate way to achieve the best outcome in cases of trauma and accident. In view of that, there has been some consultation under way across the province, in which I hope the region of Ottawa-Carleton has been participating, with ambulance drivers, the unions involved, the hospitals and the physicians, in order to evaluate the various studies that have been done and to come to some conclusions with respect to what the policy and approach of the ministry ought to be with respect to paramedics.

Mr Sterling: I'm puzzled by why consultation is necessary when 50 cities across Canada already have paramedic services and the cities of Toronto, Hamilton and Oshawa in this province have paramedic services. It seems to me that the time for consultation has passed and that it's time for protection of people in the Ottawa-Carleton area to be addressed. Do you not find it passing strange that the second-largest city in the province of Ontario does not have this kind of health care service?

Hon Mrs Grier: What I attempted to indicate in my first response to the member was that the matter is not quite as clear-cut as he puts it; that in some of the cities, in the United States particularly, where there are paramedics, there are differences of opinion and differ-

ing studies and evaluations as to whether the provision of paramedics, as opposed to an enhancement of emergency rooms and various other emergency services, is the appropriate way to go.

In view of that controversy, before coming to a conclusion on the request for an extension of this service, we have undertaken, in consultation with the stakeholders, to evaluate and review the various studies that have been done, and I'm not at the point of being able to give the member a conclusive answer to his question.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): My question is for the Minister of Health. Collagen is a protein that is used primarily for cosmetic surgery, and it's not covered under the Ontario drug benefit program. However, collagen has been a successful treatment for incontinence resulting from post-surgery complications.

A constituent of mine in York East, a senior, has become incontinent as a result of kidney surgery. The constituent's doctor recommends collagen treatment, and it's quite costly. The doctor has indicated that he has written to the director of the Ontario drug benefit plan in the past and has been turned down for coverage of this treatment under the plan.

If the Ontario drug benefit plan will not cover the treatment for seniors, how can the Minister of Health ensure us that this treatment will be made available to those constituents who would benefit from that treatment?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I thank the member for his question. I'm certainly aware of his interest in advocating on behalf of his constituent.

The procedure that he describes is a relatively new one, and the issue has been raised in discussions between the Ministry of Health and the Ontario Hospital Association. The position that the ministry has taken is that if this procedure is performed in a hospital, then the hospital should cover the cost of the collagen, as it's used as an implant, frequently as a substitute for surgery. I'm happy to convey that position to the member by this answer.

PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assem-

bly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

Signed by 309 constituents, I endorse it.

1450

GAMBLING

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I too have affixed my signature to it.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Paul Wessenger (Simcoe Centre): I have a petition with respect to the amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"We, the undersigned, hereby register our opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"We believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

HEALTH CARE

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition

signed by a number of doctors and patients in the city of Toronto.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

I agree with this petition and have affixed my signature.

LANDFILL

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): This is a petition signed by three people from the town of Markham about the dumps.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas on October 24, 1991, the NDP government introduced Bill 143, the Waste Management Act, and tried to force the Legislature to pass the bill before Christmas in 1991 without public consultation or notification to affected municipalities and residents and without naming the candidate landfill sites; and

"Whereas the NDP were forced into five weeks of public hearings and listened to over 200 presenters all recommending amendments to Bill 143; and

"Whereas the NDP refused to listen or pass any opposition amendments to Bill 143 which would protect and secure individual and municipal rights to full environmental assessment hearings on waste alternatives such as rail haul; and

"Whereas the NDP used their majority to pass Bill 143 on April 23, 1992 with the full support of and endorsement from Jim Wiseman, MPP, Durham West; Larry O'Connor, MPP, Durham-York; Gordon Mills, MPP, Durham East; and

"Whereas the NDP named 57 candidate landfill sites on June 4, 1992; and

"Whereas Ruth Grier and the Premier refused to meet with groups opposing the dumps and refused to consider the alternatives like rail haul, contrary to Mrs Grier's support of rail haul in January 1991; and

"Whereas Mrs Grier refused to meet with the residents and the mayor of Kirkland Lake to review the Adams Mine proposal and proceeded to ban rail haul

without considering the impacts on the northern economy; and

"Whereas the NDP government created the Interim Waste Authority to find a solution to GTA waste and operate independently from the Ministry of the Environment, but at the same time the IWA must adhere to Mrs Grier's ideology and her ban of waste alternatives such as rail haul and incineration; and

"Whereas the IWA and NDP government refuse to conduct an environmental assessment on the alternatives and remain firm on subjecting communities in the regions of York, Durham and Peel to a process that ignores their fundamental rights to a review of alternatives and employs a system of a criteria-ranking that defies logic and leads to the selection of dump sites on environmentally sensitive areas, prime agricultural land and sites located near urban areas;

"We, the undersigned, want Bill 143 revoked and replaced with a bill that would allow a full environmental assessment on all waste management options."

I have affixed my signature to this with pleasure.

OMA AGREEMENT

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition that was forwarded to me on the letterhead of the Oxford County Medical Association, and it's submitted to me by Dr Miettinen, who's a medical doctor in the riding of Oxford. It calls upon the government to withdraw the proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition with respect to the government's negotiations with the health care sector which reads as follows:

"Whereas the introduction of Bill 29 makes substantial changes to the Ontario drug benefit plan that would allow the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make unilateral and significant changes to the Ontario Drug Benefit Act through regulation and without consultation with seniors nor negotiations with pharmacists;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly to adopt the amendments to Bill 29 as proposed by the Ontario Pharmacists' Association, which are affixed to this petition."

I concur with this and have affixed my signature to it.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): I have a petition to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from the people of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That free and open collective bargaining for public service employees be restored and be returned to its

honourable position in Ontario;

"That the social contract in its present form be destroyed and that viable programs and services in the public sector be maintained for the betterment of all Ontarians;

"That the government withdraw Bill 48 and, in place of this bill, that the government work cooperatively with public service unions to find an equitable solution rather than eliminating valuable public services."

This petition is signed by some 38 constituents, and I have affixed my signature thereto.

INSURANCE TAX

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): I have a petition here signed by approximately 100 retired teachers in my riding, from Tilbury, Chatham, Blenheim, Thamesville and Merlin. Sorry, Chatham is in Mr Hope's riding.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the imposition of the 8% sales tax on group supplementary health insurance premiums is a regressive tax for pensioners, who pay 100% of the group supplementary health insurance premiums; and

"Whereas the individual pensions of approximately 10,000 retired teachers are less than \$10,000, well below the poverty line, an extra-heavy burden will be imposed on them; and

"Whereas these retired teachers have served this province well for many years and may require extended health care, it is unfair and unbearable; and

"Whereas a retired couple with semi-private entrenched and dental insurance coverage pays a premium of \$1,585 annually and the levying of 8% sales tax would increase this premium to \$1,711.80;

"We, the undersigned members of the Kent district 3 of the superannuated teachers of Ontario, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario not to include the 8% retail sales tax on group supplementary insurance premiums where such groups are composed entirely of retired persons."

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East): I have a petition signed by some 750 people opposed to wide-open Sunday shopping which reads:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition to wide-open Sunday shopping.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for quality of life, religious freedom and for family time. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on retailers, retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to reclassify 51 Sundays as working days should be defeated."

I've affixed my signature.

1500

SCHOOL BOARDS

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): I have been asked by the residents of Ontario in my riding to table a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"In order to achieve school board accountability, to provide the Provincial Auditor with the right to do value-for-money audits on school boards and allow the school board auditors to open the books to the scrutiny of the public."

That was introduced by a member of my riding, Arleen Reinsborough. I've signed that.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Wayne Lessard (Windsor-Walkerville): I have a petition provided to me by Dr Gary Ing, who is the president of the Essex County Medical Society.

The persons who have signed that call on the government of Ontario to:

"Move immediately to withdraw the proposed measures made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

Mr John Sola (Mississauga East): I have a petition which reads as follows:

To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

I will add my signature.

PRODUCE-YOUR-OWN BEER AND WINE

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): I have a petition signed by 2,434 people in opposition to the new tax for the brew-on-premises beer and wine.

It reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, believe that the new tax on brew-on-premise home brew is unfair, unwanted and unreasonable.

"We are concerned that it will eliminate jobs without increasing government revenue.

"This new tax is inspired by big, multinational brewing corporations whose only desire is to keep us from enjoying home brew. Scrap the tax before it begins."

I've attached my name.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from 75 constituents in the riding of Sarnia who are also members of the Central United Church.

It reads as follows:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before.

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I present the petition.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): Petition to the Legislative Assembly:

"Free and open collective bargaining for teachers has had a long and honourable history in Ontario. In order for change to occur, all parties must work cooperatively, not independently where one party would be seen as working unilaterally in their own interest.

"The current economic situation requires both the government and teachers to work together to find an equitable solution. The social contract will deny teachers their rightful salaries, slash jobs and eliminate valuable programs and services for students.

"We ask that the government restore immediately the principles of free and open collective bargaining for

teachers. The government must also maintain its share of the funding for public education as defined prior to the June 9, 1993, announcement of reduction in payments to school boards."

I affix my signature.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

TOWN OF MARKHAM ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Cousens, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr41, An Act respecting the Town of Markham.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the honourable member for Markham have some explanatory remarks?

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): Just briefly. This is a very important bill that will affect many home owners in the town of Markham.

The Acting Speaker: It's a private bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon Mike Farnan (Minister without Portfolio in Education and Training): Mr Speaker, I wish to move third reading of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Could the honourable member make sure he's in his own seat.

Hon Mr Farnan: I believe I've found my new location in the House. I apologize for the inconvenience.

The Acting Speaker: Could you now move the bill in question?

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL ONTARIEN DE FORMATION ET D'ADAPTATION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

Mr Farnan, on behalf of Mr Cooke, moved third reading of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Just before we start discussion, this item is a time-allocated item. The debate will end at 5 o'clock. The vote on this item will occur at 5 o'clock. We have an agreement, I understand, with the other two parties that any other divisions that are required as a result of matters that are dealt with after 5 o'clock will be deferred to 5:45 for a vote.

The Acting Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

Hon Mr Farnan: I have some comments to make today that I hope will provide the members of this Legislature with a useful overview of what we have an opportunity to achieve with Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board.

I think all of us understand that with respect to this bill we are in a challenging but quite enviable position

as legislators in that we are faced with an opportunity to create something truly ground-breaking, truly fresh and innovative for the people of this province. This is an important juncture in the life of Ontario, with a fragile but encouraging economic recovery on the way and with a rare convergence of views by the members of all three parties, and indeed with the federal level of government and other governments across Canada, on the crucial need to reform the labour force development system.

My colleague Dr Richard Allen, the member for Hamilton West, who introduced this legislation and whom I congratulate for his hard work and invaluable contribution to this bill, remarked how striking this convergence of views is. In his remarks to the standing committee on resources development when public hearings began, he observed: "Rarely has there been an area of public policy around which such a consensus has emerged. Everyone seems to agree that a well-trained, highly skilled workforce is absolutely crucial to the economic and social health of any society."

1510

I quite concur, and I know that many members of this Legislature, in particular our able and diligent opposition critics, have stated that clearly we owe it to the full range of our constituents, to the people of Ontario, to get beyond our partisan differences and use our legislative authority to put the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board in place.

This is no time to stand pat, to rely on time-worn and comfortable notions about the economy's cyclical resilience and to sit on our hands while we wait for the jobs to come back and the flow of investment to resume.

I believe we all understood this when Bill 96 was introduced. Frankly, throughout the debate we have heard in this House, the representations that have been made during public hearings and the briefs that were submitted to the resources development committee, we have all underscored the need to make sure we build skill levels in our workforce as an integral part of our work to encourage economic renewal.

I think it's also well understood why the status quo in Ontario is not as effective as it could be. We have to retool and reskill right across our province. The various communities, the various enterprises and various places of learning can't readily undertake this work in isolation if we are truly going to restructure in earnest. We need a coordinated approach with agreed-upon overall objectives flexible enough to recognize that there are valuable insights and a tremendous wealth of experience and expertise that we can all draw on across the entire province. Quite simply, we need a coordinated partnership, and I can't explain OTAB any more succinctly than that, a coordinated partnership.

I know the process to get this far hasn't always been

easy and I'm not naïve enough to think that we can just wish into existence some utopian round table at which the stakeholders can gather to work in perfect harmony. Despite the overall consensus on training and adjustment reform, during the public hearings we heard many contrasting opinions on some of the specifics of how OTAB would operate.

For example, just as one group would assert that we should more tightly constrict the functions of OTAB to keep an eye on it, another group would ask that the proposed board be given a free hand. We heard from some that the central board should make all the key decisions, while others told us to ensure the system was decentralized and decisions were all made locally.

In reviewing the amendments proposed by those who appeared before the standing committee, the hearings struck me as a kind of process of point/counterpoint in which one brief's proposal would call for the erosion of something that another brief emphasized was vital and inviolable.

For example, this was the case when representations discussed whether OTAB's emphasis should be on social goals or economic goals. As was stated in our original discussion paper and is reflected in the legislation, the government's view is that these goals are interrelated and complementary and there is no need to rank one set of goals ahead of the other.

I am confident that the members of the steering committees formed by the labour market partners to assist us in developing this bill do in fact well understand and appreciate this. However, just as people come to the bargaining table with a starting position and then work towards compromise from there, some of the numerous groups who gave their attention to this bill took the opportunity to state which of the two objectives they saw as the priority.

Of course, we will always have these differences of opinion, but I am not disheartened by these contrasting viewpoints. Rather I take that as more of an indication that the question of how to reform our training and adjustment system is being considered with the serious attention it deserves.

It has never been the intent of this bill to impose some idealized, secret formula for training or any single simplistic approach to labour force development on a province as rich and varied as is Ontario. Quite the contrary, we very much need to be able to hear on an ongoing basis a variety of insights and a whole range of ideas to help us put together a coordinated system of diverse solutions.

It has been quite natural, in my opinion, that people came to speak to the committee and took the opportunity to go on the record with their views of what OTAB should ideally be. But I believe it is not accurate to assume this means that the labour market partners

cannot make some concessions or that they are incapable of fashioning compromises over what seem to be intractable differences. In fact the evidence suggests this has already started to happen.

The members on both sides of the House will know how much negotiation among the labour market partners took place to produce the blueprint from which Bill 96 was drafted. I would remind members of how this government even went so far as to share early draft wording of the bill with the labour market partners' steering committees, and I caution my colleagues not to lightly overlook that reality.

I am grateful for the close attention that the resources development committee gave to Bill 96 and I am certain that we will have an improved piece of legislation as a result. I would say to my colleagues opposite that I'm also quite grateful for their own careful examination during committee of the whole.

But I also ask all members to keep in mind what the labour market partners have put together for us to review. Keep in mind that this initiative has their support. Keep in mind that the people on the steering committees, representing business, labour, women, racial minorities, people with disabilities, francophones and educators and trainers, came from a broad range of society.

They and those they represent are a thorough mix of people from all political perspectives and they have all approached the task of negotiating in good faith to help us develop draft legislation in as non-partisan a spirit as possible, striving to keep the interests of the province as a whole in mind.

Despite their differences, our partners have told us in effect: "Yes, we want to be part of OTAB. We want to provide the leadership that you are proposing. We know what's at stake and we know what's involved. Despite what our personal, ideal image of OTAB may have been, we can live with what you have proposed, and we want to get on and to work on it."

There is another important achievement worth mentioning, and that is the model for a decision-making process. It is a good example of our collective effort to take into account the interests of all. This model was developed in consultation with the labour market partners and has been agreed upon in principle.

1520

In general, where consensus is not possible and as a last resort, matters put to a vote by the governing body of OTAB will not be decided by a simple majority. We've proposed a model that would make sure that no one group's interests can consistently dictate the direction OTAB will take, and I'm convinced that it is a workable model.

My point is that we're very, very close to being able to give the labour market partners, our constituents, the

mechanism that they have told us that they very much want so that they can lead the training and adjustment system. Yes, it has taken time; yes, it has been a bumpy road occasionally. We have discussed and consulted and done our level best, believe me, to strike a balance between contrasting positions.

Striking a balance does mean, if one is cynical, that everyone has been a little disappointed in some respect. I think that came out in the public hearings. But more importantly, the balance we have struck and the demonstrated willingness of our partners to get involved means everyone sees OTAB as an idea whose time has come and whose design can be made to work.

The result is not some magic elixir, some panacea for all our social and economic woes, but before I conclude I would ask that the members of this Legislature pose a question to themselves. When before have we ever had an opportunity to take this kind of inclusive, multipartite approach to giving people the skills they need to meet the challenge of economic renewal, wealth creation, fair treatment and equal opportunity? When indeed?

Of course, we never have, and it can be an anxious process breaking new ground and attempting something brand-new. But I believe we all know that none of us were put in office by the people of Ontario to shy away from a task just because it represents an element of the unknown or just because it presumes we will have to leave the safety of conventional thinking.

We have an honourable compromise in this legislation. We have some real freedom and significant authority to offer OTAB, and we have the requisite checks and balances to keep an eye on public funds and programs.

We have secured an opportunity for input from all the traditional experts in labour force development as well as from many who have till now been denied a voice. We've devised a way to permit local solutions to be developed that will respond to local needs and retained the benefits of a coordinated system to provide and plan for all of Ontario's needs.

This bill is the work of the labour market partners themselves. I have to say how proud I am that the partners have helped us begin an era of real and meaningful cooperation among those who work, those who want to work, those who hire and those who teach and train. It's long overdue, but it certainly isn't too late.

It is with great pride that I introduce third reading of this very significant, important legislation.

The Acting Speaker: Questions or comments?

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): This is the first opportunity to publicly commend the member for Cambridge in his new position, which is entitled associate minister. I also want to compliment him on the speech. I don't know if he had the opportunity to do that speech himself or whether it was through the

ministry, but certainly it was a well-written speech and hit all the right words.

Unfortunately, the big question with this bill is, will it work? I will leave the judgement to the actual workings as this board gets established. I think there are many, many concerns that have been voiced out there that were not addressed during the committee stage, with all due respect, even though when the member spoke, he talked about the amount of consultation.

A lot of our amendments that were put forward after a lot of work were not implemented, so it's nice to say there was broad consensus, but I honestly, truly believe that there were a lot of people who had concerns that were not fulfilled. So I say to the member, the only one thing that came out, and I sat in on some of the hearings, is that everybody hopes this will work, because without training, I firmly believe this province will be finished in terms of its economic base.

Having said that, we saw many holes, many areas where it needed to be improved. They were not. I will hopefully articulate some of those when I get a chance to debate on third reading, but I will say to the member that I really believe there still are some shortcomings. We wish the member luck in implementing this but, unfortunately, I think there are going to be some major concerns that still will not be addressed by this bill.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions or comments? Seeing none, the honourable member for Cambridge has two minutes in response.

Hon Mr Farnan: I very simply would like to thank the member for Oakville South for his kind personal remarks and also for the tone of his comments. I'm sure when he speaks to the bill he will have his own party's position and some of the positions that were raised at either end of the spectrum throughout the hearings that I referred to in my speech. But certainly in his response to my introductory presentation, the tone of his comments, I believe, were very positive and very encouraging. I sensed from the member that he wants it to work. I hope that's true.

I believe that all members of the House in all parties must recognize that training is indeed, as the member for Oakville South quite correctly pointed out, the key to the future, and that is why goodwill on all sides—I think the people of Ontario expect this of us in this very rapidly changing society.

Whether we represent labour or business, whether we represent municipal government or hospitals or school boards or provincial government, the people of Ontario are saying: "Look, we just don't want a critical approach based simply on criticism. We want approaches that are constructive, we want people working together, we want to see partnerships."

This legislation is an extraordinary partnership that this government is proud indeed to have initiated and

we welcome very, very much the support of opposition parties and of the public to the success of this enterprise.

1530

The Acting Speaker: Further debate on third reading, Bill 96.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): It's an honour again to be standing in my place as the Liberal critic for skills training to be speaking now at third reading of the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board Act, Bill 96.

Last week, as the Speaker will remember, we had our debate in committee of the whole House, where we had a further opportunity to bring forward amendments. It was in the intersession this winter that we had four weeks of hearings where we were able to listen to the people of Ontario, especially those primarily interested in skills training. All the labour market partners were there, bringing forward amendments and suggestions, and I'd like to speak to that a little later on.

Of course, it was December 1 of last year, according to Hansard here, that we had our second-reading debate and the vote on that, and that was an opportunity I had to make a 90-minute speech. I just assure the members of the House that not only will I not be doing that today, according to the rules, but it won't be necessary, because we have had ample opportunity to bring our points forward.

Many of those points that I brought forward over the last year on the concept of OTAB and the implementation of OTAB by this government remain the same and I find now are being confirmed by other people out there, even some of the major players within OTAB. In a way it's kind of sad to see that happening, because we all, as members, want to see OTAB succeed.

Unfortunately, I think it's doomed to failure because of the recipe that was designed from initially a very good concept, but I think the recipe and the rush in which we're putting the recipe together also is going to doom it to failure. I hope not, but that's what I think.

I think this was also confirmed by an article in the Toronto Star of July 16 by Judy Steed, where she does quite a substantial article on OTAB and its progress. We all in this House know it has taken a long time to get OTAB established. In fact, it's not really established yet. I understand the minister will have a press conference tomorrow, finally announcing the membership of the board of OTAB. It's taken at least a year for the ministry to try to get a board established, and there are many reasons behind that which we don't really have time to go into today. But again, it's a bad start and I think it forebodes what's going to happen with OTAB.

I hope that these things don't happen, that we get on with it and that we can get on not only to getting a good board established across the province as an umbrella group, but that as my amendment has stated in

this legislation, an amendment that was accepted by the government, we get on very quickly in establishing the local training and adjustment boards, because I for one feel that's where the work is going to happen. It's not going to happen on a province-wide basis; it's going to happen on a local basis, with local workers and business people and educators and trainers and equity group representatives understanding the training needs for those communities and starting to establish those core programs for those communities. I think that's the way we're going to get the Ontario economy back on track.

I'd like to quote from this article of Judy Steed's of July 16, because even some of the key players like Richard Johnston—who is now the chairperson, as we all know, of the Ontario Council of Regents, which is the parent body of all the community colleges in Ontario, really the group of institutions that basically produce about 70% of the training—now has a lot of questions about the viability of OTAB and the way it's being put together.

I'd like to start with that and talk about that, because I've been saying from the very beginning that, in principle, this is a very sound and good idea. The way one should proceed with this, rather than what the government is doing, which is sort of forcing this partnership—because that's what we're doing. We all want partnerships in all the endeavours of public life in Ontario today, but you can't force a partnership. What you have to do is invite a partnership, and you have to nurture it and coax it to get it started and get it flourishing and maturing.

What we don't have in this province, which is very unfortunate and very sad, and it's not unique to this country but unfortunately a bit unique to Ontario, is that we don't have a labour-management relationship in this province that is mature, very much unlike the province of Quebec, which is unfortunate, where for years labour and management have seen the commonality of their goals and have worked together in building the Quebec economy. We don't have a mature relationship there.

You can't force this relationship, but you can start it. As I said, you can cultivate it, you can nurture it and you can help it grow. That's what I've always asked this government to do, to start that process, and to start that process by bringing these people together on an advisory level, because that's the way you start it. Don't bring all these people into a room and say: "We're going to force this relationship. We're going to force this partnership. By the way, we're going to separate you from government and we're going to give you a whole pile of money and we're going to make you solely responsible for all skills training in Ontario."

I think to start off like that is a recipe for disaster. I think we might be able to end up that way some day if we take those incremental steps working towards that. So while I'm criticizing the government on one hand for

being so slow off the mark to get the process started and we should have got this process started a couple of years ago, once we got it started, we should have moved slowly in developing those relationships so we get people working together.

I'm very concerned about that and I bring that point again. I only have to look at the occupational health and safety agency, which has a very dismal track record when it comes to cooperation. Again, because that labour-management relationship in Ontario is not mature, is not sound, unfortunately we have a lot of other axes being ground when it comes to those relationships, and therefore these agencies and these partnerships that we'd like to see developed—and all three parties would like to see these developed—suffer. These partnerships suffer.

I say to the parliamentary assistant that we need to take a bit of time in making sure that those relationships mature, that the partnership develops so that we have a true partnership, and so we would more or less walk before we run. That is one of the key points I wanted to bring up today.

Another main point that I brought up in amendments, both in committee that we had this winter and also in committee of the whole House debate that we had last week, is to make sure that we had the right representation on the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. This is another sticking point that I find could very well lead to the failure of OTAB.

The government has to have a more balanced representation of all the labour market partners in order for OTAB to succeed. In order to do that, it has to reach out further into the worker community especially, because one of the sore points of 70% of the working women and men in Ontario who don't happen to find themselves organized under a collective agreement and therefore under a local bargaining unit being under a parent union is that they do not find themselves represented at the OTAB table. They will not be allowed to have a say as to how skills training will be developed in their particular sector.

That's a very sad point. I've conceded and quite agree with government members that the unionized representatives of the workforce can certainly represent all the workforce when it comes to all the general worker issues. There's no doubt about that. Unions are certainly organized and well-funded and knowledgeable, through their research departments, to be researching out the needs and the benefits that are required by working men and women in Ontario when it comes to pensions, working conditions, health and safety, wages and all the basic, general, working, bargaining points and benefits that working people need in Ontario.

But when it comes to very occupation-specific trades and skills, it's going to be important that we have all the players at the table. Through the very selective

representation that this government has chosen through the path of saying that only 30% of Ontario workers, those who are organized, are going to be allowed basically to have direct representation on OTAB and unfortunately, through this legislation, the local training and adjustment boards, we're excluding a lot of people.

Mr Speaker, I know for you and for I, who have some roots in the agricultural community, this is one particular sector that will not have a voice at the table, and that's sad. I remember one of the members opposite shouting out during my second reading speech: "Well, how would we pick such a member? How would we find somebody?"

I always say to this government that other worker groups have all sorts of affiliates, associations and other groupings that are quite approachable when it comes to asking for representation. It would be very easy to get representatives from sectors that traditionally find themselves unrecognized, unorganized by organized labour, but also from some of those very fast moving and new sectors of the economy that, because they're so new, aren't organized either, many of those high-tech industries. We're going to need some of those people at the table who are in those fast-growing industries that are going to be requiring the very fast-needed skills that are going to be required out there. Those people should be at the table too.

Unfortunately, you're going to see some of the traditional manufacturing unions and resource extraction unions, only, represented at this table and not a good cross-section of everybody at the table. That's sad and I hope that some day the minister will see to it that we get a more balanced representation when it comes to that.

I'd also like to talk about local boards, because many of us who have taken an interest in skills training really believe that the answer in bringing people together, which is what the goal of this bill is, is not in an Ontario-wide, umbrella organization that primarily this bill, until my amendment was accepted, speaks to, but really it will be founded on the local boards and the establishment of bringing a good partnership together of local people, people who have a community of interest.

This is something I want to talk about, because of the 22 LTABs, the local training and adjustment boards, that are so far being proposed by this government and have not yet been decided upon, there are a lot of disagreements by the different communities that basically have been forced together in these proposed boards as to their commonality and their community of interest.

If the local boards are to work cooperatively together, they have to have that community of interest. They have to understand each other's needs and have a sense of community and work together. We have that already. Many of the CITCs, the community industrial training committees that the federal government had set up,

came together as a community of interest. They have very like needs, wants and desires and have some similar goals as to how to accomplish the training ends in those particular groups.

1540

Unfortunately, what the OTAB legislation is going to do is really throw the baby out with the bathwater, because what it's going to do is throw out all the local training and adjustment boards that are already established. Whether they're ones that have been established without any government guidance or the ones I just referred to that the federal government had organized, they're all going to go. They're all going to be out the window, because what we have now through Bill 96, the OTAB legislation, is a kind of cookie-cutter approach. The cookie-cutter imprint from this legislation is now going to be imprinted right across the province.

This is the model that the NDP government has decided is best for Ontario and best for every community and region in Ontario. The local people won't have any say. It's got to be this particular style of partnership, this particular proportion of labour representatives and worker representatives with business people, trainers and the equity groups. The cookie-cutter approach is going to be placed right across Ontario. In other words, we have another example of government saying: "What's good at Queen's Park: We at Queen's Park know what's good for all the regions."

I'm very concerned about that, because as most members around here know, the regions are very different from each other in this province. It's a very diverse province and it's really going to be necessary, I think, to give some flexibility.

I'll give you a practical example of that, Mr Speaker. This particular model of eight worker reps and eight business reps, with the trainers and the equity groups, certainly could work in many highly industrialized areas of Ontario where we would find that most of the industrial workers would be unionized. That would work. That would work in an area of Oshawa and it would work in an area of Hamilton where you have a very high percentage of the industrial workers unionized. Probably it fits just right.

But what about, say, you take Hamilton and mix it with an area like Brantford and then down through Haldimand county and Brant county. We have a very big agricultural community. How are the interests of steelworkers from Hamilton, who have a tremendous challenge ahead of them, for sure, in working with the big steel companies in trying to make a very viable and high-tech steel industry in the future so that Canada can stay in that business, similar with the agricultural workers of Brant and Haldimand counties? How, when you foist all those people together, will there develop a community of interest?

I don't really see it happening. It's not going to be

able to happen because, first of all, the agricultural people aren't going to be very well represented on the worker side, because the workers there have to come from organized unions, so many of the workers in that community will not find themselves at the table, because for whatever reason they do not find themselves in a union.

These points are very important. They have to be worked upon and there has to be flexibility so that, whatever local LTAB area is decided upon, it can reflect the nature of work and the potential nature of work in that area. If it can reflect the nature of work in that area and those people bring forward their representatives from work in that area, then I think they will be able to work closely together to come to some agreement as to what are the needs, and work together as to how the training needs can be supplied to that LTAB.

I think that's very important, and I really believe it's going to be important for this government to address that. In fact, until the amendment I put forward in committee was adopted, there was no compulsion in this bill for OTAB to establish all the local training and adjustment boards throughout the province, but we now see in subsection 18(1) that, "OTAB shall designate local training and adjustment boards that comply with the regulations made under this act." It's very important that OTAB, once established, get on with that work, because I think it's going to be at the local level that we're going to see some elements of success.

We're going to need to have OTAB working as well as it can, because right now we're at a very critical time in the history of Ontario. The economy of Ontario right now is going through a major transition. We relied in Ontario primarily on two main sectors of the economy to make it work. There was our branch plant manufacturing sector that we were blessed with after the Second World War, a sector of the economy we didn't have very much control of because it was branch plant, but thanks to the tariff structure, after the Second World War multinational companies, primarily American, were basically forced to establish, and primarily they established in southern Ontario. The other major sector of the economy was the resource extraction industry, not only agriculture but mining and forestry. Northern Ontario certainly shared in that, as it still does, with forestry and mining and some agriculture. These were the primary generators of the Ontario economy.

What we find now, with new competition around the world and new trading arrangements such as free trade, FTA and NAFTA, is that these branch plants don't have to operate in Ontario, and if we're not competitive here we've seen many of those withdraw, unfortunately, to the United States and to their countries of origin. Because of that, we find ourselves having to re-examine the nature of work in Ontario: What will the nature of work be?

Similarly, in northern Ontario we find the very same thing—a little different characteristic—in that we have less demand worldwide for many of the resources that we produce in the north. So we're similarly challenged in northern Ontario with having to find new work and developing what that new work will be, but the basis of that is going to be to make sure that all our people, in north and south and east and western Ontario have the skills to accomplish the new work.

It's very hard right now, even for somebody who has an interest as I do in skills training, to specify what those jobs are going to be, because by the years 2000 and 2005 and 2010—we can't predict today what about 30% to 40% of those jobs are even going to be, but we do know they're going to be work of higher value, and that means we have to have a greater and broader skill base in Ontario. That means we have to have a better education system. We have to have smarter workers. Being competitive doesn't mean that people have to work harder or do with less. What it means in Ontario and Canada to be competitive is that we have to work smarter as a people.

So skills training is going to be very important, and we have to make sure we do that by working in partnership with everybody. I'd like to just come back to that word "partnership" again, because one of the partners that is ill represented on OTAB are the educators and trainers themselves. I understand the government's argument that this should be consumer-driven, and I certainly agree with the previous speaker and with the minister that we want OTAB to be consumer-driven. What that means is that workers and management, the business community, need to be the prime drivers and motivators of OTAB, and that's right, but it's very important that all the five different training communities are also represented in OTAB.

I've twice now brought forward amendments that would still keep the balance of a consumer-driven board while at the same time bring in more representation from the educators and trainers. I felt very badly that the government would not accept what many of those trainers and educators were saying: that they all wanted a voice at the table. In fact, going back to Richard Johnston, the president of the Council of Regents for the community colleges of Ontario, he has basically withdrawn his support of OTAB now because the representative from the colleges was not accepted by the committee that was to represent all the educators.

That's part of the problem. What is wrong with having a representative from the community colleges, from the universities, from community trainers, from private trainers and from the school boards, so that all five aspects of training in Ontario represented by those different bodies were represented on OTAB? That would be important. What you could do is make sure that the quorum situation and the voting mechanisms

were designed not to increase their power but to make sure that all the trainers and educators were present, so that not only could they understand what business, for the very first time, maybe, for some trainers, and labour were requiring from the educational community—because that's the idea behind this: put everybody together so they understand where they come from—but also that they listen to each other and understand their various roles in delivering training, because there is a place for all trainers and educators in Ontario.

There's certainly a place for the publicly funded education system, but there's also certainly a place for community trainers, who capture a group of clients that the other systems don't, and there's certainly a place for private trainers, who work very closely with the business community in providing very skills-specific training and services for the business community. Everybody should be there at the table. That's very, very important.

This bill excludes three of the five training groups, and that's wrong. That is very much wrong, and I would hope again that someday this government would see the light and would make some amendments to this bill to make sure that those people are there.

It's an important time that we get together on skills training, and OTAB is certainly this government's attempt to do that.

I would just like, before I close today, to talk a little bit about the purpose of this bill and the goals, because part of the problem with this bill—and the parliamentary assistant spoke about it—is that this bill is a compilation of compromises. That's what makes the bill weak.

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While in the Canadian system of political life we've basically founded our country and our provinces on compromise, and while I believe that you have to listen to everybody and come to some sort of commonality, in certain aspects a sense of leadership has to be expressed. Some time in Canadian life there needs to be a government with a vision to say, "We've listened to everybody, but now we're embarking on this path."

This is our vision, in this case, for skills training in Ontario. That requires vision and that requires leadership. Sometimes when you compromise, what you get is weakness. When you read the purpose clauses of this bill, what you see is weakness. You don't see strong vision with strong direction, and that's needed in this bill. Unfortunately, that's missing.

What we have today, as I've outlined with a little bit of our economic history of what's happened here, is that we're at a point now where we have to declare war on this economy. We have to say that we want to mobilize all the forces, all the strengths, all our efforts in Ontario to make sure that all Ontarians have the skills to rebuild this economy. This is important so that all of us as

individuals have the ability to support ourselves, to support our families and, together in doing that, to build a strong economy. That's important, and it's going to take a will, it's going to take a strong mandate. In fact, what it's going to take is a strong imperative from this government, an order, an imperative from this government to say, "The number one goal of the government of the province of Ontario and all its people should be to garner all the skills we can in this province to be the most competitive workplace in Ontario."

It's that sort of language and some sort of vision statement that should have headed up this bill so we really had a sense of the strength of leadership that was necessary to move forward with a redevelopment and a redeploying of all skills training. Instead, I think what we have is a collection of compromises here.

What we've created is a very big new bureaucracy. Granted, we're bringing all the bureaucrats and civil servants together from all the different ministries—and I think that's a good idea—but we're bringing them together and then we're setting them outside, out in a schedule 4 agency. For those people who don't really understand what a schedule 4 agency is, it's going to be very much like establishing another Workers' Compensation Board.

It's going to be establishing an agency that's fairly independent from government, so it doesn't have the hands-on command and control of a minister of the day who is responsible to the people of Ontario through the Legislature of Ontario. I'm very concerned about that. It's a schedule 4 agency that's got a lot of autonomy and a lot of independence, and it can go wrong, as we've seen with the other agency, the health and safety agency that I referred to earlier. I'm very concerned about this, and I would just plead with the government that it puts in its memorandum of understanding what's missing in this bill, that strong leadership; that it put it in there, that it put in some very strong vision, some very strong purpose clauses that are missing from this bill, to give it that direction, to make sure it's got the imperative, just like other imperatives that other governments have done in the past, because when people put their wills together, they can do it.

We've seen in the history of humankind the different sort of imperatives that have made things happen. We've seen in the space program in the United States probably a political imperative because a president, President Kennedy, said, "We want to put a man on the moon in so many years." That happened because a leader in a country said, "This is a goal we have and here's the direction we're headed in." It takes vision to do that, and John F. Kennedy had that vision.

We've seen the country of Japan, absolutely devastated economically after the Second World War, take the economic imperative that, "We have to rebuild this country." There's a country that had no resources at all

that has rebuilt itself, that has picked itself up and is now the leading economy in the world.

That's the type of vision, that's the type of leadership I'd like to see from this government. That's the type of vision and leadership and imperative that the people of Ontario expect from their government. I expect no less either, and I implore this government, through the minister and the parliamentary assistant, to develop that vision through regulations, through its memorandum of understanding with OTAB, so that we can get on with the business of skills development and redevelop the economy of Ontario for the betterment of all.

Mr Carr: I want to comment very briefly on the member's speech. I think he hit on a number of the concerns that our party has as well. He talked about some of the local boards and keeping some of the good work that's being done.

In my own case, the Oakville Chamber of Commerce came in and made a presentation in which it talked about the same thing. We in Halton have what is commonly referred to as HAPITAC in our Halton board; that's the Halton and Peel Industries Training Advisory Committee, which has been working closely with the board of education, with Sheridan, and has put together what we think is a pretty good model for the rest of the province. We would hope that a lot of what the member said will come true. They would like to see that particular group of people put together in the new local boards: There's a lot of expertise; they've gone through many years of ironing out the problems; they're working very closely with people in my area. Sheridan College is working closely with the companies, like Ford Motor Co, through a lot of the work that HAPITAC is doing.

I would commend the member for bringing up the fact that there are some people in the local areas right now who are doing some very good work, as was mentioned with my chamber. I think the words they used were "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." It's not exactly great English, but that's what they said.

I would hope that as we proceed, and I think the member's right on, the local boards will be the key to the success. I hope the members opposite and the minister will know that there are some fine things being done out in the communities right now. That isn't to say that it is in all areas, but I would hope that a lot of the approaches being done in my own area of Halton would be carried forward when this legislation, as it probably will today, passes.

Hon Mr Farnan: I first want to express my pleasure that the critic from the official opposition has endorsed the principles of this bill as being sound. I'm also pleased that the member for Timiskaming supports the government's emphasis on the importance and the key contribution and significance of local boards.

I found it passing strange, mind you, that he spent so much time decrying the shortfalls of local boards when in this bill the specifics of local boards are not spelled out at all and are something that will be brought forward again.

There were some contradictions in the comments made by the member.

He thought that the process, on the one hand, was too slow; on the other hand, he found that the process was too fast.

He talked about the need for leadership. Indeed, this is precisely what this bill is.

Of course, he also made comparisons between what happened in Quebec and what happens elsewhere. Let me tell you, the mature relationship between labour and management in Quebec is founded on working relationships based on compromise. The same is true in Germany and the same is true in Japan.

He talked, on the one hand, in terms of simply looking at inviting, nurturing, coaxing, and then said, "We want strong leadership and direction." These are dichotomies, these are things that must be brought together. We experienced in the process all the various viewpoints, but at the end of the day, our partners say, "Let's get on with it; let's make our compromises; let's make it work." We invite the member of the official opposition to join the team, and let's make it work.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions or comments? The honourable member for Timiskaming has two minutes in response.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to thank the member for Oakville South, who by the way I think is a very important member of this Legislature, as he's my mother's member. She lives in Oakville, so I support the member for Oakville South and make sure he does a good job for his constituents, of whom my mother is certainly one.

I'd like to comment also on some of the other comments that were made just now in response to my speech. It gives me another opportunity to explain that again, where the speaker said I was being contradictory when I was saying that at one time we're going too slow or we're going too fast. I'll say it again.

I think the government was very slow off the mark to get OTAB established, to get that partnership going. Here we are now, it will be almost three years into the mandate of this government, and the minister tomorrow will be announcing the board. What I said, though, was that once we got the process going, I would like to see that process now move a little more slowly so that we mature those relationships. We should have got on to this three years ago and maybe by today we'd have almost three years of those people working together, so you could give them all that authority we're now going to give them this afternoon.

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That's certainly my concern about that, that we're very quickly giving them all that authority, full responsibility on skills training in Ontario, and we're giving them all that money—it's going to be in the millions and millions of dollars in order to do that—and we're going to throw them in a room off from government with that authority and with that money and expect them to get along together, which they haven't shown they can right off the mark, and provide us with that leadership that we so sorely need in Ontario for skills training. I'm just concerned that there's going to be a lot of argument and wrangling while time flies by when we need some very important decisions to be made as to skills training.

It's very urgent. I wish we'd started three years ago and by now might have had some good decisions and the good partnerships matured. We're three years behind the time and I hope that everybody does put their differences away and works together for the betterment of all of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: I wish to thank the honourable member for Timiskaming for his participation and his response. Further debate on third reading, Bill 96? The member for Oakville South.

Mr Carr: I'm pleased to enter the debate and to add some comments that I hope will be appropriate.

I agree with the previous speaker in that I think one of the goals of this legislation really should be to make us more competitive. We all hope that's what this will do. I see some major problems in a couple of areas, and I'll hope to articulate them, but this is really what it's all about and we need to recognize that there have to be changes.

I don't think many members here will know that, as recently as about 50 to 60 years ago, 40% of the jobs in this province were in the field of agriculture. Today we're probably statistically less than 4%. People would probably say that's an awful lot of jobs to lose over the last 50 to 60 years. The fact of the matter is that we have had people employed in other areas and the fact of the matter is that that 4% of the population are now producing more than was the case back 50 years ago.

So I think we shouldn't be afraid of change, and people right across the spectrum—the business community, the unions, workers—I think are finally realizing that there has to be change, there has to be improvement in the way we do things.

I had the opportunity to go out, with the member for Oxford, who I know is here, to Sheridan College, an opening of our training centre out there. He was participating on behalf of a member.

One of the concerns we've got is, we have this new training centre that's been opened up, and as we went on the tour we have the new high-tech machines that are

in there training people. The people who are doing the training, the people right on the front lines who we were speaking to, were saying that one of the problems we've got is the people we are training now, the kids, as they call them, coming out of high school, don't have a lot of the skills and training in the areas of math and reading and writing to be able to properly function to get the training on these machines. Because the machines are all high tech, it takes a great deal of math skill.

So as we look at this whole issue of training, I think we need to take a look at the whole issue of education. That's why we did our paper, *New Directions*, Volume II, which basically took a look at the whole issues of education. As we now wait I guess two years for the new commission to report, I say to you, a lot of what we're talking about later on in terms of training at the advanced levels will depend on how well we do in our education system. They do need to go hand in hand.

I firmly believe that, to look at it practically, the standard of living of the next generation will be in direct proportion to the skills and training we give them today. That's why there are some major, major disagreements on how that's done, but fundamentally the principle is that everybody needs to do a better job. We all agree on that. There aren't too many people who say we should do it. We can go back to the Premier's Council, which talked about that.

One of the areas that we have concern with is the role of the private sector, and the reason I think we're concerned is that in other areas we've seen this government shut out the private sector. I refer to a couple, the day care and the nursing homes, recently announced, about a week and a half ago. We honestly, truly believe in our party that the private sector has a role to play.

Right now, with the funding being cut back to Sheridan and all the colleges and universities and school boards, it's kind of ironic that we are now saying the public sector can handle all of it when we in fact are cutting back in the public sector because of the fact that we're out of money in this province.

So I firmly believe the private sector has a role to play. I'm concerned that they will not. My own chamber, which came in, voiced some of those concerns as well. We believe that it's because of this government—and I say this, trying not to be too confrontational to the other side—it's because of the ideology and the background of socialists. They believe the public sector is the only way to do it. We've seen that in day care and in nursing homes.

With the number of people we need to train in this province quickly and the massive amount of training—because what we're doing today may not necessarily be right for tomorrow. It needs to happen, it needs to happen quickly and it needs to happen on a massive scale. I say to the associate minister, the minister and

the parliamentary assistants who are here that I honestly, truly believe the private sector needs to be a part of that. If they are not, we are not going to get the numbers we need.

We look at the other areas where the private sector has been driven out—day care is one example—and when you look at the end result, the waiting lists are now longer because of the private sector involvement. The way it's done, of course, is they don't just stand up and say, "The private sector is shut out; you can't participate any more," the same as in day care and nursing homes; it all relates to funding. With the local boards having control of the purse-strings over funding, one of the big concerns is that the minister, through his wide-ranging powers in here, will say to them that they will only be funding the public sector.

I say that right off the bat, because I believe that right now there is not enough infrastructure in place to handle the necessary training, because we are talking about a massive number of people who need training.

The ministry will now have powers to issue directives through this bill to the board and can request a report any time on any aspects of OTAB. I guess the problem we've got in a lot of areas with this government and their actions in other areas is that we don't trust them in this area to set the goals very clearly and get them articulated. But again, we will give them the benefit of the doubt in that area. We're concerned and we hope they will be able to manage it properly.

I'm pleased there will be special audits allowed by the Provincial Auditor because, as we see in a couple of other areas with this government, the most recent being, I guess, the sexual assault centres, when you don't have controls in place, well-meaning programs can, quite frankly, run amok. If you do that, there could be some very, very detrimental effects out there. So that's one aspect I'm pleased with.

We're a little bit concerned with the accountability of the minister but, again, we honestly, truly believe—we will attempt to be as constructive as we can in assisting the minister in that regard.

The previous speaker talked about representation and I know that was a big, big factor in the hearing reports. People are concerned. I know when they came in—my college, Sheridan, has been working very closely with the Ford Motor Co and is very concerned. Some of the people who are doing the training right now—right on the shop floor, I might add. This isn't in the Sheridan facility; they're right on the shop floor. They work with the Ford Motor Co. They put together a program for training and upgrading of skills and it's done in cooperation. I hope we don't lose that.

The big key and the big question is, how do we get that down to the small and the medium-sized businesses? They are the job creators in this province. We

can talk about the large companies and most of them are doing some type of training. I referred to the Ford Motor Co. Most of the job creation in the future will be at the small and medium-sized companies. The concern we've got is, how will they access it? Most of the small businesses that came in—I refer to my own chamber—said: "We would love to have a program to be able to get some skills and training for our people. We realize it's an important issue"—and I guess that's the biggest barrier—"we realize it has to be done now, but how do we access it?"

When we told them how it's going to work, that there's going to be a local board and it's going to decide and it's going to have a pool of money—and we'll get into what that amount will be, depending upon the makeup; they are then going to decide what companies get the money—there was some major, major concern that the small and medium-sized companies, which need the assistance because, quite frankly, in the case of the Ford Motor Co in my riding, they're already doing the training without too much assistance, although I guess they did get a government grant up to \$4 million for some training.

But the small and medium-sized businesses who are not doing it right now—not because they don't want to. We have to remember that skills and training and upgrading is fairly new. Even though we now all recognize it and everyone realizes that it needs to be done, it has only been in the last couple of years that a lot of companies have bought into it, and the same with a lot of the workers. I know in the past few years, when Ford and the CAW would talk about training, the eyes would glaze over, and people saw that as another word for reducing the number of employees. Now everybody realizes it needs to be done.

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The small and medium-sized businesses, when they're told there will now be a local board that will decide who will get the money, most of them are fearful that they're going to have to line up and become lobbyists and deal with this big bureaucracy, even though it's at a local level. They've looked at the other government setups, whether it's the Workers' Compensation Board or a couple of the other boards, and they see this big bureaucracy. Quite frankly, I say to the members opposite, they may or may not be founded, but there are some very, very legitimate concerns out there that the small and medium-sized businesses will not be able to access it. I hope in the end the other side will realize that this is where the job creation will be coming from in the future. It is the small and medium-sized businesses that will be doing it. That's why I hope they will listen to some of the ideas put forward by the people in the small business community who again are wishing them success.

I am concerned about the representation on the board

and how it will work. Again, I'm not going to apportion any problems, because there are some good elements. I happen to sit on the Premier's Council on innovation as our party's representative. I had the great pleasure of working with somebody like, for example, Fred Pomeroy from the Communications and Electrical Workers of Canada, who has done an excellent job of being able to instil—I guess that's exactly what the Premier's Council on innovation is doing—in the workers out there the need for education and training. He's been very productive in the meetings that I've been to. He's been very, very helpful and has recognized that need. As a major labour leader, I hope he would continue with that.

There were some concerns. I was there when the Ontario Federation of Labour presentation came in. The brochure they brought in was, to say the least, very confrontational. I hope the OFL and Gord Wilson and the folks over there will take another look at the whole issue of training and try to work in a more cooperative manner, because quite frankly, that presentation—I don't know how many of the members opposite were there—was highly confrontational. The brochure that was left with us was not I think indicative of what the OFL would like to see.

Again, not to apportion any blame, but I think everybody realizes there needs to be better management-labour cooperation. The companies that are surviving today are doing that. The ones that are not, whether it's management's fault or whether it's labour's fault, quite frankly, they both lose because they go out of business. That's the ultimate test, I guess. Certainly, business and labour must work together. If this joint representation on the board will be able to facilitate that, I think it will happen, with the good input that is out there.

The president of Inco, who sits on the Premier's Council, does an excellent job as well with Fred. There's been a tremendous amount of cooperation. It's bogged down in a lot of the detail, as committees often do, but I would hope the boards will work a lot better than some of the other labour-management cooperation. I think of workplace health and safety. Again, this isn't to apportion any blame. When you get down to it, it doesn't matter whose fault it is; the fact is that if they don't work together, we're in trouble.

We've had many problems in that area. We're all going to be the losers, because as we found out with this government, all the things we care about, the social programs that are out there, don't depend upon the compassion of the government; they depend on having a healthy and prosperous economy to support them. Unless we have better labour-management cooperation and training, and it may sound rather negative, but I honestly, truly believe that our standard of living is going to be in direct proportion to the skills and training that are necessary out there. If we don't do a good job

on this, it's going to affect us dramatically long-term in all the social programs.

Again, to get off on some of the problems that have happened with the workplace health and safety agency I don't think would be helpful, but we had hoped, through some of the amendments we brought forward, to be able to facilitate better cooperation. That isn't going to happen. Some of the amendments weren't passed. The previous speaker spoke about that as well.

In all honesty, we're now saying we tried to fix that, but we hope both sides will realize that if we do not work together and there isn't labour-management cooperation, all the goodwill in the world is going to go out the window. The comments made by the new associate minister, I think, were appropriate. Everybody wishes partnership, but unfortunately we haven't had that in the past and I say to both sides, we need it.

We're a little bit concerned about a lot of the regulations. We're concerned about what's going to happen with the cost of the local boards and this is the way a lot of government programs start. I think of the way school boards were originally set up where we'd have part-time people working and then, all of a sudden, we gave them a little bit of an allowance up to \$6,000. Then it became a full-time job and full-time salary to the point where now, I think, the Scarborough trustees on the board may even make more than we make in the Ontario Legislature, with all the problems associated with those big increases with the Scarborough Board of Education.

So when the concerns were brought forward, as they were, through many of the presentations we heard through the committee, they look at other government programs with the school boards and they say, "We are a little bit concerned that these local boards that are going to start out as volunteer and working together are going to attempt to create some problems down the road because they get bigger and bigger and bigger." A couple of the amendments we put forward were to address that as well. They didn't succeed.

I also want to quickly just talk about some of those amendments. I know our critic, the member for London North, Dianne Cunningham, worked extremely hard putting together numerous amendments. I sat in on some of the hearings and we listened and brought forward some of those amendments. We were a little discouraged that they were not listened to. We had hoped to bring in some that would talk about the recognition of the development of a competitive workforce, because that's what it really gets down to.

We'd talked a little bit about what we would like to do with the redistribution of directors, with a real emphasis on the education sector, because I honestly, truly believe they are the people who are going to be left out, more than anybody else in this sector. I can't speak for the rest of the province, but when I speak

with the people at Sheridan, the various people who are involved, whether it's the president, Mary or Gus or the people we've been working very closely with, they're very sceptical that all of the work and the ability that has gone on through literally years of reworking and redefining are going to be thrown out the window.

I say to the parliamentary assistant and the associate minister, I hope that will not happen. I hope a lot of the local boards will be set up with the input of some of the fine people who have been doing the job, who have learned from the past mistakes, because this certainly hasn't been easy.

We're concerned about what will happen to the small and medium-sized businesses' voice, because their concern has been voiced about the voice only being of organized, unionized workers. As you know, in the small sector, the small and medium-sized businesses, a lot of those are not unionized. There is a great fear out there that the small and medium-sized businesses will not be able to access a lot of the training money that's out there and they will be left behind because of the fact that they are not unionized.

I will use an example in my area of what the concern is: You've got the Ford Motor Co, a big company. Thousands of employees definitely need skills and training and upgrading like they've been doing. A lot of the people are concerned that now, when the local board gets set up, a lot of money is going to be going to the big companies like the Ford Motor Co, and the small and medium-sized businesses are going to be left out.

I know there are going to be different agreements with the amount—Ford in my area got, I believe, about \$4 million in training. There's some concern that the way government operates—and I don't say this in a negative sense, because I guess all governments in the past may have been criticized for this—but they're going to say, "Okay, the \$4 million that we already gave you comes out of your local board's share," because, as you know, governments like to announce programs when it's politically advantageous, as it was in the case of the Ford Motor Co. They'll now say, "Well, that amount that you got, sorry, that comes off your local board."

The same with the General Electric plant that was given some training money in my riding as well: The Premier came out, I guess, about two years now, maybe 18 months, whatever it was, opened it up and gave some tremendous amount of funding to General Electric. But the problem is, the other businesses are saying: "Now they got some money for training. Will that all be rolled into the amount the local board will get, and will now the amounts given"—quite frankly, when you add up the dollars that are going to be spent, those two companies may take the bulk of the resources that are there for the local board that's going to be set up in our area.

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This may or may not happen as we get going, but there is some concern, because we know governments will rush to make an announcement because the Premier wants to get out there and GE's ready to go now and they say, "Okay, here's some money for training," and everybody assumes that there's new money coming into the system, and then two years down the road or a year down the road when this gets set up and running they're saying, "No, the money we've given to the Ford Motor Co and the money we've given to GE now count for your local area and, I'm sorry, there's only this amount left for the other companies."

So I say that I think the members opposite probably haven't thought that far down the road, but that is the voice of a lot of the people in my area. I tried to give you a bit of an example using an example in my area of what the concerns are. Hopefully that will give the members some idea to think, because the public is really sceptical that you're going to use the announcements on training funds for the two companies, GE and Ford, and that's it for the Halton area and the Halton-Peel area, because they're going to access a great deal of the money.

I also want to touch on a couple of issues of the cost of OTAB. I know there have been various figures bandied about. The concern that we've got, and I guess the question I asked Richard Johnston when he came in as a representative of the colleges, I said: "We're going to spend, give or take, a billion dollars"—that's billion with a "b"—"on the whole OTAB program. At the same time, we are now limiting access"—and I again used the example of Sheridan, to people getting into Sheridan—"because of cutbacks in funding."

We are now cutting back colleges and universities to the tune where they are now giving out notices to people saying: "You're in in September, maybe. You can enrol in Sheridan or McMaster or one of the universities, maybe." At this time of year, students still don't know because of the funding problems and the whole issue of what's happening with the social contract.

So we're very concerned, and I asked Richard Johnston, "If you had a billion dollars to spend, where would you spend it?" because he came into the finance and economics committee saying, "We're underfunded in colleges and universities," and did a tremendous amount of stats which said 80% of the graduates of colleges are getting jobs and did a very effective presentation, saying, "If we want to create jobs in the future, we've got to be educated." As a representative of colleges, which you might expect from Richard Johnston, he said, "This is the place to do it and we do a great job."

So I asked him: "If you had a billion dollars to spend, where would you spend it? Would you spend it on the

universities and the colleges, which don't have a lot of the necessary equipment out there?" We were fortunate to get some of it at the Sheridan training centre, but many of the others, the Ryersons and some of the others of the world, are training a lot of the students on outdated equipment, because the equipment is very, very expensive.

So I said to Richard, "What would you rather do, spend a billion dollars on the colleges and universities and allow many people who go back to retrain to get the training there, or would you set up the OTAB board?" At that time I think he was still on side with the government, and he paused and took a great amount of time to speak, which, for those members who know Richard, isn't normal. I think he was really grappling with the question, and then he finally said, "I would do both."

But we've got to remember, at a time when there's underfunding, when we're basically right now in my area going to limit the enrolment at Sheridan—and it isn't just young people going back for training. It's older workers who are going back, people my age who are going back for retraining if anybody goes back to a Sheridan or a McMaster. My wife is going back to McMaster, taking some courses and upgrading some skills in that area.

It's no longer the kids coming right out of high school who are going into our colleges and universities. The vast majority is night-time courses, part-time people who are working, and if we were going to spend this billion dollars, there are a lot of people who are saying it should be done in our colleges and universities because that is where the future is going to be and where the education dollars should be spent.

So I say to the members opposite, the money is going to be spent, but how we integrate with the colleges and universities is going to be very important. We attempted to introduce some amendments which would ensure that would happen. They didn't pass. But I still honestly, truly believe if the government is willing and if the government is willing to have its local boards mandated to have involvement with the colleges and universities, then I think it can and still will happen.

I know on the other side they honestly, truly will want to do that, because I don't think there are any on the other side who don't believe that colleges and universities should play a major, major role.

The problem we've got with this is that when it gets down to the local level the people you appoint are really going to be the key to what happens at the local boards. While I guess I'm pleased that the minister will keep the accountability so that if the local board isn't doing something properly they will be able to mandate it, the real key will be getting good people on the local boards.

I say in a non-partisan sense, there are good people,

somebody like Richard Johnston who is a member of the NDP and always has been. There are good people from the Liberals. There are good Conservatives. I would hope that this would be one board where we will not play political games like we've unfortunately seen on some of the other boards and staff it with political appointments.

I honestly, truly believe this government has learned its lesson in that regard. I know when we originally started off the Ontario Hydro board was stacked. Marc Eliesen was a typical example of a political person who was staffed, and I notice now the most recent appointments are people with strong backgrounds because I think they've learned that the people you appoint to these boards and commissions are very important.

In my own area, we've got a lot of expertise out there. The people of HAPITAC should be involved. Most of them are non-partisan anyway, although I guess like anything else there will be some, but I say to you those are the people who should be out there. The people who should be appointed to the boards are the people who have done a good job and I think that will probably happen, but I would encourage the minister and the associate minister to ensure that happens.

Where we have I think lacked confidence in this government is it probably believes that, but the actual implementation sometimes doesn't happen. Whatever we can do to encourage you to get good people on those local boards, we will do. I would say to all members, most of us have worked with a lot of the people in our own communities, and I would hope, when the time comes for the appointments for some of the boards and the reappointments and so on, that MPPs would assist in making sure we get some of the fine people who are out there.

I will talk very briefly because I see the time is quickly marching down, and I did want to get to a couple of more points. There is some concern about organized labour's viewpoint dominating the decision-making process. I honestly, truly believe that now in the 1990s even organized labour realizes that it's in its best interests and the best interests of its members to have skills and training that are necessary.

You can talk about different unions and I won't point them out. There have been some that have done a better job at this than others, but I think everybody, even in the discussions that are out there now with the CAW over the big talks, is talking about the training that will be necessary to keep the jobs.

What has happened now is that even in the auto sector, which I'm familiar with, our exports are up about 26%, but we're doing it with less people than we did even three years ago. I shudder to think where we would be in this province without the increase in the auto sector, and the numbers that I use, the 26% increase, come right from the budget of the Treasurer.

The auto sector is now producing more parts and cars in the province of Ontario than ever before and they're doing it with less people.

All of the unions I think now realize it's in their best interests to have the skills and training that is necessary and that lifelong learning is something that is going to be here whether we like it or not because the alternative is being unemployed and out of a job.

We're a little bit concerned about what will happen to the non-unionized sector, but again I honestly, truly believe that this government has learned a lesson over the last two years. When they came in, I think there was somewhat of a bias towards unionized workers and input from the unionized environment, for obvious reasons, but I think now, having been in government for a couple of years, they realize that they have the same goal as us and that's to create jobs.

It doesn't matter if it's small or medium-sized businesses that are non-unionized or more jobs that are unionized in the CAW or the Steelworkers or whatever, if we can create the jobs here that will allow us to provide the opportunity to have the standard of living that we need.

I don't know if they took it that way but it was meant as a bit of a compliment because I honestly, truly believe that the old days are past. We don't care whether it is a unionized job or a non-unionized job. For heaven's sake, let's give the people the skills that are necessary so that they will have jobs, and not have them on the unemployment insurance rolls or the welfare rolls, because that is ultimately what is going to destroy this province.

1630

There were some concerns that the local boards were going to use their power to introduce a lot of the social changes the government of the day believes in. I don't think that will happen and I would encourage them not to do that. What we need to do is to make sure that the workforce has the skills and training necessary, because even having said that, even knowing that all three parties in here believe it and even knowing that management and labour believe it, the fact of the matter is that the details are what are going to decide whether we're successful.

We all know the goal, that we need more training, is acceptable, but we have major concerns with this, and what we attempted to do in our amendments was to improve the legislation so that at the end of the day it would allow the actual workings to be more effective. That's where we have problems with this: the actual workings of the local boards and the effectiveness that is going on.

I guess I have run over my time. I promised the member for St Catharines, whom I saw here earlier, that I would leave some time. I will do that now, although

with him not being in the House, I'll quickly sum up in the next minute or so.

Our concerns are out there. They are with the representation, but I think that can be dealt with if this government is willing to do it. They are with the private sector, but again I think it could be done with this government if it's willing and able to do it, and also with the local boards.

The success ultimately will rest with getting good people, so for heaven's sake, let's not play the political games that have been done in the past by all governments, probably at all levels. Let's get some good people on there who know and understand what we are doing, some people who are going to be results-oriented, who are going to be able to properly analyse the situation, take corrective action, implement solutions and sustain them. If we do that, at the end of the day, even with the misgivings that are out there and some of the concerns that we have, the good people on the boards can, I think, get by a lot of the problems we've got.

Those are some of the preliminary comments I have. They are a lot of the things that had been voiced on second reading by our critic as well. We will be working with this government over the next little while, as the boards get set up and as we proceed down the road, on improving this. It is the one issue where I don't think we want anybody to play political games. We're going to disagree, not because we see getting any political glory out of it, but because we honestly, truly believe that there are some areas where we can offer input. I wish some of them had been done with our amendments, which were put forward in good conscience by the member for London North, but that isn't going to stop us from continuing to do it. At the end of the day, and I say this, the standard of living of our people is going to really depend on how well we do. Our party certainly is there, as I believe the Liberals will be, to help this government as it proceeds.

I was very pleased to participate in the debate. I hope the government members will take some thought of those recommendations. I appreciate this opportunity.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): I thank the honourable member for his participation in the debate. Questions and/or comments?

Hon Mr Farnan: It was a very wide-ranging response from the critic for the third party, the member for Oakville South. Let me simply state that I was delighted to hear in his comments how he recognized and indeed gave examples within his own riding of this government's very non-partisan approach to the allocation of funds. He indicated that his riding was the recipient of very generous support from the government. That is something we certainly appreciate, when it is recognized in the spirit of goodwill by opposition members that this government is attempting to address

in as fair a way as possible all the needs of the province.

I also heard in his comments a recognition of the government's effort to be very non-partisan in its appointments system. Again, I have to thank the member, because it's very reassuring to hear members of the official opposition and third party benches recognizing that there is an honest effort being made. Of course, we all understand that membership of any political party should not exclude an individual from serving, because people from all parties and political affiliations, given the fact that they are well qualified, can indeed serve the public interest very well.

It's that kind of comment coming from the opposition, recognizing this government's non-partisan approach to the allocation of funds, recognizing the government's non-partisan approach to the appointment system, that instils within the public of Ontario a confidence in government and a confidence in politics, and I thank him for that generous, honest approach in the House today.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The honourable member has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Carr: I thank the member for his comments, because I know that when they put the money into Ford Motor Co and General Electric it wasn't because they hoped to win the seat for the NDP. Even last time they finished way back in third, and certainly Oakville has not been known as a stronghold for NDP support, so in all fairness, the money that went in there was not for political reasons, and the member is very right in that regard.

But I think what it shows very clearly is that the training that needs to be done, and I hope the point he picked up, needs to be non-partisan. The main point I was trying to make with that wasn't the money that was spent. I am hoping that now we've spent this money—the local people in Oakville with the local board—the money will not be deducted that has already been spent. I take it from his comments that is not the case, that it is new money that will come into our area.

It is very important that the government realizes that the way this is implemented is going to be probably the most important part, and I am pleased that the government is going to attempt to continue to cooperate. If we do that, I think we'll make this a better province in which to operate.

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I am pleased to offer some of my comments on the bill to establish OTAB, the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. I don't think there's any doubt among any of us in the Legislature, and probably most people who are familiar with this area, of the need to make substantial progress in how we improve the skill levels in the

workplace, how we handle what's called labour force adjustment: if someone loses his job, helping him, as smoothly as possible, if need be to acquire some new skills and to re-enter the workplace.

I don't think there's any doubt that if we are going to have a strong economy—we are competing now, and I think we all recognize this, with literally every industrial jurisdiction in the world—if we're going to compete effectively, we have to turn this into a competitive edge. That's not debatable, and the objectives of the training are not debatable, in my opinion. I think that's a given.

What is debatable, though, is: Is this is the proper vehicle? From the day the government announced this, as some members here will know, I have had significant reservations about the mechanism that is being set up to do this. I will admit once again that I was around when something called the Premier's Council in the previous government—this was in a report from the Premier's Council, and I will accept that; my name was on the report. But I will say that at the time I had some questions on it and my questions have become more firmly rooted in concern.

I hope I'm wrong, but I am afraid I won't be wrong on this. We will only know, as we always do around here, in a matter of months or years whether the opposition's concerns were right and are realized or whether the government's right.

1640

My concern is around a very fundamental part of this bill. This sets up something, to use the jargon around the Legislature, called a schedule 4 agency. It is an independent, arm's-length agency with its own decision-making responsibility. It is like the Workers' Compensation Board. I think that's wrong.

For me, training and education are truly a lifelong experience; it's a continuum. I had thought we had all kind of agreed to that, that there no longer are artificial barriers after grade 8 or after secondary school and that to the best of our ability we should make our access to education and our access to skill development, again to use the jargon, seamless. We should be striving to eliminate these artificial barriers. That's why I happen to think having one ministry responsible for it is a good idea, for secondary schools and elementary schools, colleges and universities and training. It's a good idea, and we should be eliminating all the possible barriers.

But here we go, setting up an artificial barrier, an agency that has the authority to make fundamental decisions in this area, even the appointments. There's a 22-person board that will make these decisions. Even in terms of the appointments to that board, the government of the day, whatever government it is, will not have the responsibility for them, because it is not the government that makes the decisions. The business community will appoint its eight people, the labour community will

appoint its eight people, the women's community will appoint its person, the disability community will appoint its person, the racial minority community will appoint its person, the francophone community will appoint its person.

As representative as they may be—and frankly, they represent a lot of Ontario—they don't represent all of Ontario, so I'm worried about that. With an independent agency, in the final analysis the public doesn't appoint those people, and I still believe we are the public. They don't appoint them; the people who appoint them are the interest groups.

As I say, those groups speak for a large part of Ontario, but they don't speak for all of Ontario. We are in the process of turning over something that is absolutely fundamental to our future, not just our economic future but the social wellbeing future of the people of Ontario.

The budget of this agency—I've not been able to get an accurate assessment—I understand is around \$600 million. But there is no doubt that the goal has to be, surely, that we are going to coordinate federal and provincial programs in this area, and I believe that's another perhaps \$1.5 billion. So we're looking at a budget of \$2 billion.

This agency will be run by 22 people the public does not have the authority to nominate. Based on everything I've seen, the mandate of those people is to bring their agenda to OTAB, which may be fine, but I don't believe that the total of those interest groups represent in total the interests of the public of Ontario. As I said earlier, they are important interest groups, but they don't speak for the total Ontario that I think we should be speaking to.

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs): But they are only a focus, Gerry.

Mr Phillips: I don't know what the member said, but he said it's only a board. They are a decision-making body whose job it is to run this agency at arm's length from the government. That's a mistake, in my mind, but only time will tell. Like a lot of other things around here in opposition, the best we can do is point out our concerns. We hope the government will hear them, although I think it's now been two years at least where I've expressed similar concerns here in the Legislature, and the government is intent on going ahead with it. I guess I understand why, although I think it's a mistake.

It would have been very easy to fix this one. This board could have been made an advisory board, not one where we established in legislation that it will be this board that will have the final authority in making these decisions.

We're now probably only 20 or 25 minutes away

from finally passing this piece of legislation. It will not do me much good two years from now to say, "I told you so and you are wrong." I wish that were not the case, but it is clear to me, as well intentioned, by the way, as these 22 people are—I know they are sitting out there right now; I believe they've all essentially been appointed. The government rented the space for this place back in October, nine months ago. The space has been sitting empty, at taxpayers' expense, waiting for the board to take over. The space was rented, I believe, in October and the date on this bill is November; it was rented before the bill was even introduced in the Legislature. There's space, I think, on Bloor Street sitting waiting for the group. I believe they have a big announcement planned tomorrow.

I imagine those 22 people are delighted, because they're going to be very powerful people. They will control a budget of, I think, \$600 million. They will control a potential budget of, I believe, up to \$2 billion. They'll have an enormous amount of authority. I don't know who the 22 people are; I don't doubt that they're very competent individuals who will represent their constituency well. But I'm personally convinced that it is a mistake to be setting up this artificial barrier when we should be, in my opinion, breaking all of these things down.

There is, as I said earlier, no doubt about how important this area is. I am convinced, as I think most observers of the economy are, that our future depends on finding ways in which we are able to help the talented, hardworking people of Ontario acquire the kinds of skill sets that will allow us to have a vibrant economy. All of the objectives of this are right, all of them, but it is the wrong vehicle.

We're about, in a matter of a few minutes, to make a decision that we had a choice on. We could have made this an advisory board. We could have said, "Let's give it two years or three years and see how it works out." I was the Minister of Labour under something called Bill 208—we always talk around here in these numbers; nobody out there knows what Bill 208 is, but it's the Occupational Health and Safety Act amendments—and we set up a slightly different but similar organization in the Workplace Health and Safety Agency.

In my opinion, rather than helping to get on to tackle effectively the important areas of workplace health and safety, we've had to a very large extent a pitched battle between, on the one hand, the labour group and, on the other hand, the business group. I don't know who's right or who's wrong in it, but I do know that they have been at loggerheads for a considerable period of time, seemingly not able to move the health and safety agenda along as I'd hoped it might have been.

That raised questions in my mind. This one, I think, is on a much bigger scale. Health and safety is extreme-

ly important, but this is a much broader mandate. What we're going to do, I'm afraid, is doom ourselves to not having the kind of effective vehicle we should have. As I said earlier, setting up a ministry responsible for the continuum of education and training's a good idea. Then we undo a lot of that good by setting up this independent, arm's-length schedule 4 agency. I hope the government members know what a schedule 4 agency is and I hope they've gone through what schedule 4 agencies have the responsibility to do. One of the members is shaking their head, but I would hope they have, because it is clear it is an independent, arm's-length agency responsible for making these kinds of decisions.

I will be reluctantly voting against the bill, because I think one can't help but endorse the objectives of what's trying to be done here, but the vehicle that they selected is wrong. I'm frankly disappointed, particularly with some of the backbench members from the government side, that they would not have seen that there's a fundamental flaw in this bill and worked to see if there wasn't a way of correcting it. It could have been corrected very simply, as I said earlier, by simply making this an advisory body. Let it work its way through. We could have done everything else but not locked into legislation a fundamental flaw in the future of our training for the province.

1650

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): I was looking forward to hearing the member for Scarborough-Agincourt's remarks, because, as he said, he's spent some time in considering this issue. I'm disappointed, though, to hear that he has some doubts about what he calls the vehicle, because I think what we've come up with is a very sensitive mechanism to respond to the needs of the training and adjustment issues that we have in our province.

Just to clear up some misconceptions, there is the idea that the various interest groups, as he called them, make the appointments to the board. It's clearly set out in the legislation that these appointments are made by the Lieutenant Governor, the orders in council. They are responsible to the province and not to any nominating bodies. I think they're not considered interest groups, as he called them. They do represent the broad population of the province and are appointed with that in mind. Upon appointment, they do represent the interests of the province as a whole and not the nominating bodies, and I think that's quite clear in the way that they are nominated, as the mechanism is through the orders in council.

But beyond that there are very strict accountability mechanisms built into the legislation that, unfortunately, the member didn't mention. Certainly, as a schedule 4 agency they are beholden to such things as the Management Board, treasury board and Human Resources

Secretariat directives. There will be a memorandum of understanding, signed by both the board and the minister in charge, setting out the respective obligations of both bodies. There are short-term and long-term plans that are part of the legislation as well and there are the overall objectives of the government, as set out, policy objectives of the government, that the board will be expected to take into account. Again, it's independent but it has to take into account the training and adjustment needs of the province.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I want to commend the member for drawing to the attention of members of the Legislature and the public who are watching some of the dangers that are found in this particular piece of legislation. The member, some time ago, outlined to me and to some others the concerns that he had about this legislation. I certainly am pleased that he drew to the attention of the public the fact that, once again, this government is placing more control in the hands of unelected people.

Yet clearly the message—and I would have thought with all the polling the government is doing it would have determined this—we're getting from the general public is that it wants its elected representatives to be exercising maximum control over government agencies, because we are the only people it can get at.

They can't get at the 22 members of this very powerful board. They can get at only the elected members, whether members of the cabinet, backbenchers in the government side or members of the opposition. That's whom they can get at.

I see a real danger in the trend towards more and more control going into the hands of unelected people, because whether we like the elected people or not, we at least have the opportunity to replace those individuals. We do not have that opportunity in this case, with the board.

The other thing that the public is concerned about, it seems to me, is the growing strength of interest groups in democracy. It's not only in this province or in this country. In democracy, in the United States and in Canada, the interest groups are growing in strength. What we're going to have is interest groups represented on this board acting on behalf of the people who put them there. Where does the general public have its opportunity to exercise control? That indeed will be the question which will emerge from the passage of this piece of legislation, and the member aptly pointed that out.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Oakville South.

Mr Carr: I just very quickly also wanted to commend the member on his words. As we all know, in a lot of areas, being somebody who knows about the—

Interjection: You're out of time, Gary.

Mr Carr: Mr Speaker, is the clock not on? Thank you very much. I could have been on for three hours, though I don't think the members would have let me.

But I just wanted to commend the member for his comments. As I think we all know, this member spends a great deal of time looking at a number of issues in the economy. I think he was right on in saying that everybody agrees that training needs to be done. As somebody who has come from a background in the business sector, I think he realizes that.

It was interesting to note that I spoke with the member going, I guess, way back originally to when this started. He predicted exactly what would happen with this piece of legislation, so I know the members opposite will take it in the spirit it was taken.

There are some major, major concerns out there of groups and people. When we stand up here and articulate some of them as the member did, I think they hopefully will realize that it isn't for partisan politics; we really, honestly and truly have some valid concerns. They were voiced by the numerous people who came before this committee. I spent some time on the committee, and day after day we heard people with major concerns about this piece of legislation. We're concerned because a lot of it was not addressed.

Some of the points that the member brought up I hope and encourage the other side to listen to, because I think he brings to the table some very valid concerns. Just to follow up on some of the major comments that he made, I think as well that he was right on in saying that we're very, very concerned with the amount of authority, money and power that unelected people on the board will have. We're very concerned with it. We realize that training and skills development is very important, but we'd like to see more accountability with the people who quite frankly, if they don't do a good job, can get tossed out.

I commend the member on his comments and I hope the other side will listen.

Hon Richard Allen (Minister without Portfolio in Economic Development and Trade): I'd like to make just a few comments at the end of this debate and particularly with reference to the member's comments and criticism with respect to the advisory nature of the board that he would prefer to see in place.

In my view, there is one way in which you really do harness people's energies, and that is by giving them responsibility. To give them simple advisory capacity is not to draw them into the matter at hand in a serious way. In my view, the one way in which you can really harness the capacity of the business community, which has to put its shoulder to the wheel of training is to involve it in decision-making, on a board that has serious delivery capacity. It is to involve the labour movement, which has to be on the ground floor with

respect to decision-making around training as it affects its workers and to make certain that it has a hands-on decision-making formal role with regard to real results.

It's critically important that those in the educator and trainer community not simply be sitting there as advisors to government but be part and parcel of the formal decision-making that is made with respect to training in this province. Likewise, with respect to all of the equity groups—the disabled community, the visible minority community, the francophone community, the women of this province—it is critically important that they all be fully engaged in a decision-making role on a board that has meaningful responsibilities. I reject the proposition that this would be a better board if it were somehow advisory.

The concern that it would not be somehow then—if it were a decision-making board—linked closely enough in an accountable way to government, of course, is one that this piece of legislation takes account of in a number of accountability measures which will see that the board is responsible fully to government while carrying out its responsibilities in a responsible way.

The Acting Speaker: According to the order of the House, we will move directly to the vote.

Mr Farnan has moved third reading of Bill 96. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion please say "aye."

Those opposed say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1701 to 1706.

The Acting Speaker: I would ask the members to take their seats, please.

Mr Farnan has moved third reading of Bill 96. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the table.

Ayes

Abel, Akande, Allen, Bisson, Boyd, Buchanan, Charlton, Churley, Cooke, Coppen, Dadamo, Duignan, Farnan, Fletcher, Frankford, Gigantes, Grier, Haeck, Hampton, Hansen, Harrington, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Lankin, Laughren, Lessard;

Mackenzie, MacKinnon, Malkowski, Mammoliti, Martel, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Pouliot, Rizzo, Sutherland, Swarbrick, Ward, Wark-Martyn, Waters, Wessinger, White, Wildman, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winninger, Wiseman, Wood, Ziemba.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed to Mr Farnan's motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the table.

Nays

Beer, Bradley, Brown, Carr, Chiarelli, Cleary, Conway, Cousens, Eddy, Elston, Eves, Fawcett, Grandmaître, Jackson, Johnson (Don Mills), Kwinter, Marland, McClelland, McGuinty, Miclash, O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau), Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt), Poole, Ramsay, Runciman, Sola, Sterling, Turnbull, Villeneuve.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes being 60 and the nays being 29, I declare the motion carried. Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA TAXE DE VENTE AU DÉTAIL

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 32, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la taxe de vente au détail.

VEHICLE TRANSFER PACKAGE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES DOSSIERS DE TRANSFERT DE VÉHICULES

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 34, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Personal Property Security Act in respect of Vehicle Transfer Packages / Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi sur les sûretés mobilières à l'égard des dossiers de transfert de véhicules.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): I believe that when we last ended the debate, we were into questions and comments for the honourable member for St Catharines. I believe we have three more people to accommodate for that.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I just want to comment again on the member for St Catharines and the comments he made. Like his colleagues in the Liberal Party, every one of them who has got up and spoken to this bill has said this is a tax increase, that Bill 32 is about a tax increase. The member for St Catharines is not being clear with the people of Ontario. It is not a tax increase.

What it is, is to ensure that there's enforcement of existing legislation regarding taxes. You already have to pay sales tax on used car sales. Unfortunately, there has been a growing problem over the last several years that the Liberal government did not address; that many people were not paying the full amount of provincial sales tax on used cars. That's what this piece of legislation is all about, to ensure that there's enforcement.

I'm sure the member for St Catharines, who represents a lot of hard-working and dedicated people, law-abiding citizens who pay their sales tax—that those constituents of his who pay their sales tax would want

to ensure that other people in Ontario are paying their tax when they're supposed to be paying their sales tax. That's what this legislation does. It ensures that people pay their sales tax. I would think the member for St Catharines would want to support a piece of legislation like this.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): No matter how much the government protests, this is going to rip more money out of the hands of the consumers of the province, and that will result in more money for those people to waste in so many ways that we have discovered they are capable of these days.

I agree and I concur wholeheartedly with the remarks of my friend from St Catharines. He has hit the nail right on the head when he talks about this as a tax grab. It is like the tax grab that goes into effect on July 1 with respect to auto insurance. These people have found more ways of milking the province of every spare nickel that the poor people of this province have at their disposition than any other organized ripoff crew that we have ever seen.

The people, with respect to auto insurance, not only get to pay an extra 5% under the new budget that Floyd brought in, but they are also now going to have to pay 5% on top of a much more expensive product for fewer services under the auto insurance scheme. Like my friend from St Catharines, I decry the fact that these people are taking money away from the province's consumer at a time when the consumer is needed to drive an economic resurgence of this province.

We shouldn't be taking all this money from the consumers. We should be letting them invest it in all kinds of worthwhile projects in this province. We should be letting them consume goods that are being produced by the men and women who are employed in the manufacturing sector, who are going to be helping the retail sector, which is experiencing very tough times in this province. But no, instead, these people are using bills like 32 and 34 to scrape the money away from the consumer. They're using the new auto insurance taxes to scrape the money away from the consumer so that they cannot play a significant part in the resurgence of this Ontario economy.

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I don't know how either an NDP member or a Liberal member can stand in this Legislature and talk about tax increases; 33 from the Liberals, 32 from the NDP over a shorter period of time, and the Liberals are standing up and complaining about this tax bill. Talk about gall. They come into the Legislature, go from that side of the Legislature over to this side of the Legislature, and all of a sudden, they're against it.

They had 33 tax increases which they introduced in a period of boom times when their revenues were going up anyway. They didn't even need to institute one tax increase over the five years because the revenues were

going up naturally. The Liberals weren't satisfied with a natural increase in revenues because they were spending money so fast in this province that it would make your head spin. They needed more taxes because they were spending so much money over the 1985-90 period of time. They increased spending at twice the rate of inflation. Therefore, they couldn't just take the natural flow of revenue which increased as incomes increased; as purchases increased, the sales tax increased. The Liberals weren't satisfied with that great growth in taxes. They had to introduce 33 new tax increases.

The only thing I'll say to the NDP with regard to this bill is that I wish they would not use the book value of automobiles under the value of about \$3,000. I understand the minister has relented on our request to knock out cars that are less than \$1,000. The big problem with cars that are worth \$2,000 or \$3,000 is that it's not worth going through the process to prove that the car was less than the book value. Therefore, I think a higher-up set limit on that end is justified.

The Acting Chair: The honourable member for St Catharines has two minutes to make a response.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I thank members for their contribution and reiterate for those who are not understanding the position I've taken on this bill that I think that at this time, when the economy is so low and economic times are so difficult, when there's an opportunity to try to come out of the recession, that the government would want to extract more money, particularly out of poorer members of the population in terms of income, I find unacceptable.

I do not want to respond to the Progressive Conservative member for Carleton—

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): Why?

Mr Bradley: —but having sat in this House since 1977 and watched a long series of tax increases by the Progressive Conservative Party—

Mr Villeneuve: What was the budget in 1985?

Mr Bradley: I don't want to go into that. You see, I don't worry about the polls. I simply say, "There's a bill before the House. Do I want to engage in a partisan debate with the Conservatives, who had so many taxes, one tax after another, who have to defend the taxes of the federal Conservatives to whom they are so close?" I don't want to get into that.

I do want to talk about this particular tax in response to those members. I think what you're seeing out there is a lot of people, students, people who are perhaps going out to get their first job or who have been down and out in terms of employment, who are going out to purchase a vehicle and they're getting some pretty good bargains, because at this time the economy is pretty tough. That's the time to get the bargains. When they're

able to get a bargain, the government is saying, "It doesn't matter how much you were able to purchase this car for, we're going to assess you this much because the book value is this much." That's a special hardship.

I know that the New Democratic Party and its predecessor, the CCF, were great defenders of the rights of poor people. They were concerned about the plight of poor people. That's why I truly believe that members of the government caucus will revolt and in fact vote against this piece of legislation, which is detrimental to the poor in our province.

The Acting Chair: Further debate? If not, I will call on the honourable member for Oxford to give some wrapup remarks.

Mr Sutherland: I've listened to the debate on Bill 32, which includes the changes announced in the 1992 Ontario budget. The bill contains technical amendments which will assist in the administration of the Retail Sales Tax Act.

Several members have spoken out in opposition to the provisions in Bill 32 related to stricter controls on private sales of used motor vehicles. They have also opposed the used vehicle information package which was introduced in Bill 34 as an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act and the Personal Property Security Act.

Bill 32 makes the used vehicle market both fair and equitable for private sellers and purchasers. I would like to stress that the application of tax is based on the average wholesale price or the declared purchase price, whichever is greater. It does not apply to used vehicles sold by licensed dealers. Exemptions from the provisions in this bill include vehicles transferred by family members, vehicles purchased by status Indians for use on a reserve and vehicles brought to Ontario by new residents.

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In response to concerns raised both in debate and by purchasers, the amendments to the bill have simplified the administrative process. These amendments remove the requirement for a purchaser to pay tax at the time of registration and then claim a rebate where an authorized appraisal shows a lower purchase price due to severe damage or excessive use. Additionally, retail sales tax payable on vehicles with an average wholesale value of less than \$1,000 will be based on the declared value. Appraisals that support the purchase price will not be required.

Members' comments indicate that they oppose Bill 32 as a tax increase, and we've heard the member for St Catharines reiterate that point. I want to point out for the record once more, as I have several times, that there is no tax increase and nothing is being taxed that was not taxed before. Bill 32 introduces a system designed to combat a serious tax evasion problem involving the

understatement of the purchase price of privately purchased vehicles.

Questions were asked during the debate on the rationale for taxing used vehicles at all. The tax was paid when the car was new; why is it taxed again when the car is sold again? It should be understood that the retail sales tax is a consumption tax. It is not the sale of the used good that is taxed, but its consumption. It should also be pointed out that the taxation of used goods helps to mitigate potential pricing and purchasing distortions in the marketplace. It is important to this government that all taxpayers pay their fair share.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): I would now call on the honourable Minister of Transportation to give the windup on Bill 34.

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): Briefly, Bill 34 is associated with the protection of consumers. Simply put and by way of conclusion on this important debate vis-à-vis Bill 34, under the present conditions, and we're talking about a multiplier of 600,000 times, they're called or referred to as "private sales," if you wish. Some motorists have referred to the practice as a trade with curbsiders, but they're really private sales.

We have no way, no mechanism at present, to have a Miss Jones, for instance, buying a secondhand car from Mr Smith, not knowing if there's any bank loan against the car, not knowing if Mr Smith has driven more than 200,000 or 300,000 miles, no mechanism for protection of the consumer, no way of knowing if there's a lien against the car. In many cases, it's an invitation to a practice which is less than ethical by some individuals.

What Bill 34 does is that for a mere \$20 you're buying protection you never had before. You have a clear conscience. You get better value for money. You know it's not a delivery truck or a delivery car that you're buying, with excessive mileage on it. You know there's no lien against the vehicle. You get a history of the vehicle for only \$20.

Now it's becoming mandatory, and what it does is regulate the marketplace as never before. More importantly, the focus here is solely on information and protection of the consumer, and we're very proud to be associated with yet another consumer protection bill.

The Acting Speaker: I will deal with each of these bills individually.

Mr Sutherland has moved second reading of Bill 32. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

Those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. I declare the motion carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Hon Shelley Martel (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): Mr Speaker, it should be referred to committee of the whole.

The Acting Speaker: Referred to committee of the whole House.

Mr Pouliot has moved second reading of Bill 34. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion, please say "aye."

Those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. I declare the motion carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Hon Miss Martel: Mr Speaker, the bill should be referred to committee of the whole.

The Acting Speaker: It shall be referred to the committee of the whole.

FIREFIGHTERS PROTECTION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'IMMUNITÉ DES POMPIERS

Mr Mills, on behalf of Mr Christopherson, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 103, An Act to provide firefighters with protection from personal liability and indemnification for legal costs / Loi visant à accorder l'immunité aux pompiers et à les indemniser de leurs frais de justice.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Does the honourable member have some remarks to make?

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I am pleased to introduce the Firefighters Protection Act for second reading. The act will provide firefighters with protection from personal liability when they have acted in good faith in the performance of their duties. It will also indemnify firefighters for reasonable legal costs incurred in successfully defending civil actions or other legal proceedings. This act is not intended to restrict an individual's ability to sue to recover damages.

Currently, the firefighters are not provided with legislative protection from personal liability. As a result, they can be sued for actions which result in property damage or personal injury even though they acted in good faith.

Firefighters have to make difficult decisions in emergency situations. These decisions are often complex and require considerable technical knowledge. These situations create the potential for civil action, despite the fact that all reasonable precautions were taken and the firefighters performed their duties diligently and in good faith.

If we are to recruit and retain firefighters, particularly the 17,000 volunteers who serve most of our province, we must provide them with this support. They cannot be expected to risk their lives under the threat of possible legal action. They must be able to act appropriately, thinking first and foremost of the need to protect lives and property.

In fact, this legislation will provide firefighters with a level of protection comparable to that already provided to many other emergency service personnel. They deserve no less.

We have developed this legislation through the active participation of affected stakeholders. In particular, I would like to acknowledge all of the firefighters' associations which have advocated this legislation for some time. They include the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, the Professional Federation of Ontario Firefighters and the Firefighters Association of Ontario. I would also like to acknowledge the support of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, which participated in the development of this legislation.

In closing, we recognize the valuable contribution the fire service makes to the province, and I'm sure my colleagues on all sides of the House will want speedy passage of this very worthwhile legislation.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for his participation in the debate. Questions and/or comments?

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I'm pleased that at long last the government has brought forward this piece of legislation which has been required for some period of time. Of course, we knew that all of the answers were held in the Agenda for People, and I would have thought this might have been included in the Agenda for People and put into effect much earlier.

But as they say, better late than never. We're happy to see that at long last this legislation is forthcoming because we recognize that there are so many in our society who are volunteer firepersons, firefighters right across the province, whether it's in the regular fire departments of various communities where collective agreements offer some protection for people, or whether it's the volunteer people, or whether it's people who at work are assigned to firefighting duties. A lot of people don't recognize that this in fact is the case in a number of workplaces.

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We would not want to see these people placed in legal jeopardy. That's why in this House you will see, I think, relatively little debate on this because there is a very strong consensus and I would be very surprised if there were any dissenting votes.

The member for Ottawa West, on behalf of the Liberal Party, will be dealing with this legislation in a little more detail outlining as well a number of other recommendations that have been part of a package of recommendations which flowed from a task force or a study which was commissioned by the previous government.

This is one step in that direction. We, of course, will be looking for the government to implement many of

the other recommendations in this regard, but I think the member who introduced the bill, the member for Durham East, will recognize the consensus in the House and the strong support for this legislation. I think we can expect its speedy and unanimous passage.

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I have a question perhaps for the parliamentary assistant and that is, in the bill it will be provided for a firefighter, and I'm thinking more in terms of a volunteer firefighter than in terms of a professional firefighter. But under clause 3(1)(a) it says, "A firefighter shall be indemnified for reasonable legal costs incurred in the defence of a civil action, if a firefighter is not found to be liable."

Liability is often found in negligence cases on the basis of percentage. In other words, you could be 100% liable for an accident occurring for instance if you're driving a fire truck or you could be found 5% liable. In most cases when there is a collision, it's very unlikely that it's 100% one way and 0% the other way. In other words, it's not black and white. Usually there is some reason for a judge to apportion a part liability to the party which hasn't in fact caused the accident.

The way I read the section is that if a firefighter was, for instance, engaged in a civil lawsuit and was found 5% negligent, the legal costs which he or she may incur in defending the action may far exceed the awards of the court. So that if in fact the damage was \$50,000 and they were 5% responsible, the damage would be \$2,500. In a protracted lawsuit, the lawyer's fees may in fact be \$15,000 or \$20,000.

I'd like to know from the parliamentary assistant whether in fact the solicitor's costs would be paid if it was only found a minor degree of negligence on the part of the firefighter.

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): To the member for Durham East, I thank him for bringing in second reading of this bill because it is an important bill on behalf of the minister, Mr Christopherson. I think it's very important for those members who represent rural Ontario who depend on volunteer firefighters, and the firefighters we have are not only there fighting fires in our communities but they're also community activists.

I look at what just happened on the weekend in Dover township called Bayfest. The firefighters were very active out there promoting their community, promoting activity and also at the same time showing their skills and how their skills are there.

It's unfortunate there are circumstances that do happen in firefighting. I know in the small community of Tilbury where I grew up, we depended very much on the volunteer firefighters. There is time that is associated with the volunteer aspect of it, not only the volunteer going out and doing the firefighting, but also the volunteerism around getting the Red Cross and making

sure it's well equipped to handle the community, making sure the training is up to date, making sure the uniforms are appropriate, making sure the equipment is there to protect the community. It is very important, so there is a lot of contribution there.

I won't get into partisan politics because I believe the member for St Catharines made some comments but I think he was trying to get across that this is a very important piece of legislation no matter which government brought it forward, it does reflect, and it happened to be our government that did it.

But I also want to express to the member for Durham East, who is the parliamentary assistant, there are a couple of things that I think are still very outstanding that we have to address very quickly, and I hope the three parties can come to this, the other recommendations brought forward by the firefighters' associations, by the firefighter chiefs of Ontario, that we start to move expeditiously on other pieces of legislation which will protect those firefighters in their work, in their efforts to protect our communities and protect our homes, because I would sooner see my home saved than save the foundation. So to the member for Durham East, I compliment the minister for his efforts and hope that we will expedite other legislation that will help those firefighters in their needs.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments.

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I want to compliment the member for Durham East, because there are a lot of people who live in urban areas, the cities and what not, who don't really know what a volunteer fire department is, what a volunteer firefighter is, and, you know, there's a lot of people who live in the cities that don't know what a siren is. If you go to a small town, and maybe you're visiting in rural Ontario, there are still some areas of the province that have a siren that will go during the middle of the night. After somebody being up at work all day, the siren goes, the phone rings at their house, and they go out right away. As soon as the phone rings, they're out to fight a fire. The volunteers have to be really supported for all the time and effort that they put into it.

Training in a volunteer fire department is something a little bit different. Let me use Sunderland as an example. At Pindar's garage he's got a yard of wrecks and what not, and the volunteer firefighters will go down there and they'll use their equipment, they'll try it out, they'll tear the roof off so that if they're called to an emergency situation they can do that. These are some of the things that you don't really see unless you get an opportunity to go out and talk to some people, and it's really important that we take a look at that and recognize them for all the hard work that they do as volunteers.

Everyone knows about the hard work that volunteer

firefighters and firefighters do for MS, for muscular dystrophy, MD, and they raise a lot of funds for them. They should be applauded for that. I know that's something that we all recognize and we should share it with as many people as we can.

Another thing too, some of the small fire departments, they actually go out and do a lot of fund-raising for the equipment they actually use. There isn't always a huge tax base in a lot of communities. I know in the small rural communities that I represent there isn't a huge tax base. So I've got to thank the volunteer firefighters again for going out there and raising the funds necessary to buy the equipment needed, and I thank the member for Durham East for bringing this forward.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Durham East has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Mills: First of all, I'd like to thank all the members who have spoken to this bill, Bill 103. I think all of us over time since we've been here have been lobbied by firefighters and full-time firefighters about the necessity of this legislation. I'm certainly very proud and pleased to be here this afternoon in the Legislature to bring forward this bill for second reading, because no one but the firefighters really understands and knows how much this is needed.

I don't mean to prolong this debate, because I know that basically every member in this House is behind this and wants to see this get third reading. I would just like to comment briefly about the remark that the member for Carleton made. My interpretation, and I'm not a lawyer, is quite clear that subsection 3(1) of the bill says:

"A firefighter shall be indemnified for reasonable legal costs incurred,

"(a) in the defence of a civil action, if the firefighter is not found to be liable."

I think that's the key thing. You can't be found liable 1%, 2%. It says "not liable," and I stand by this explanation here that the firefighter will be indemnified for reasonable costs if he's found not liable. That's the key, not liable, and I don't think it pertains to 1%, 2%, 5% or 30%. Not liable.

1740

Mr Robert Chiarelli (Ottawa West): First of all, I too want to add my congratulations to the member for Durham East in moving second reading, and I fully endorse and I'm sure my caucus colleagues fully endorse all of his comments when he initially spoke.

There's enough pressure and risks on firefighters that they need not worry about lawsuits which might emanate from the conduct of their responsibilities in the ordinary course. I think that it's a timely bill and I think that in a small way it will make the work of firefighters a little bit easier to do in the province.

But I just want to comment for two or three minutes on where this bill originated and some of the issues around this particular bill, which you will note basically is only three sections. The title of the bill describes what's in the bill, and that is basically to provide firefighters with protection from personal liability and indemnification for legal costs.

If I can go back to a report that I received last month from the Solicitor General, it's a staff report that was prepared for the Solicitor General at his request on the Fire Services Review Committee. The Fire Services Review Committee was established in 1989 by the then Liberal Solicitor General and it had a pretty broad mandate to look at all of the issues relating to delivery of fire services and the managing of fire departments in the province of Ontario.

Indeed, one of the rationales for setting up the committee was that the Fire Departments Act had not been amended or dealt with in any significant way since 1949, so there was a sense among all the stakeholders in the province that there had to be some updating of the legislation affecting firefighting and delivery of fire services in the province of Ontario.

In October 1989 the Solicitor General—and I am referring to the current Solicitor General's staff report, which he distributed last month. It indicated that in 1989 the Fire Services Review Committee was established to include representatives from the Ministry of the Solicitor General, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, the Provincial Federation of Ontario Firefighters and the Firefighters Association of Ontario. As I said, the main mandate was assessing all relevant issues associated with the delivery of fire services in Ontario.

Again, the current Solicitor General's staff report indicates the results of this committee: "In May 1990, the lengthy discussions and deliberations that had taken place led to a general consensus regarding 19 of the 20 issues that were tabled before the committee." All of these groups, the groups that the member for Durham East complimented on this particular bill, reached a consensus on 19 of 20 issues. This bill, Bill 103, was only one of the items contained in that consensus that was reached in 1990. So we have to ask, what has happened to the other 18 issues on which there was a consensus of all these stakeholders?

The staff report addresses that, and I just want to get that on the record for the next minute or two. Of course the last election took place in September 1990. One of the stakeholder groups that participated in establishing this consensus, according to this staff report, and I'm quoting:

"In September, the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association"—that's September 1990, immediately after the election—"wrote to the new Premier and met with

the new Solicitor General”—this is this Solicitor General’s staff report of last month stating this—“indicating that the OPFFA objected to the review and that it believed that no amendments were required to the Fire Departments Act. The Solicitor General subsequently wrote to each organization on the committee and indicated his desire for the review to continue, that all issues were open for further discussion and that new issues could be tabled.” That’s in 1990 we’re talking about. “However, he also indicated that he expected the committee to complete its deliberations with reasonable dispatch.”

So we have the election intervening, we’ve had a report indicating basically 100% consensus on 19 of 20 issues and what intervened to stop the process, to stop this consensus from developing or whatever consensus remained from being legislated? What happened was the appointment of three different solicitors general in this government.

We, of course, had Mike Farnan at the start of this government as a Solicitor General, we then had Allan Pilkey and now we have David Christopherson. We have had very significant policy development with respect to fire departments and firefighters in the province of Ontario on complete hold while we’re shuffling ministers in this government.

While we support Bill 103 100%—no question, I endorse all of the member for Durham East’s statements on Bill 103—I have to ask, why has the process for this fundamental reform on all these related issues not taken place?

Indeed, in delivering this staff report which was requested by Mr Christopherson, he sent a letter to me, and I don’t know whether he circulated it to all the MPPs or not or whether just to myself as co-critic for Solicitor General, but he indicates that he has circulated this staff report to the stakeholders and he hopes to meet with them some time in the month of October.

If you take 1990 as the time at which there was a consensus on 19 of 20 proposed legislative items and you look at going to October 1993 and then looking at the additional process to implement all of these updates of the legislation, I think there could be some more attention to the issues affecting fire departments and firefighters than this government has given.

I’ll wind up my comments with that, saying that we fully support Bill 103 but we also say that this is only one recommendation out of 19 on which there was a consensus in 1990 when this government took office.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for his participation in the debate. Questions and/or comments?

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): My riding, even though it is an urban riding, is regional, and so as a consequence this bill is extremely important and my fire

chief has lobbied me hard and heavy on it. I want to address the comments made by the member opposite in terms of the 20 issues that were raised. This is one bill that covers indemnity for firefighters, and the other 18 or 19 would require their own pieces of legislation.

It is rather surprising and very interesting to me that this would require all those other bills over and above what we’re already doing, and we are presently sitting in July for obvious reasons. So I would just say that you have to sometimes look in your own mirror to determine why other pieces of legislation are not in this House.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? If there are none, the member for Ottawa West has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Chiarelli: I guess my only response is by way of example to the previous speaker. This particular bill is going to be given about 20 minutes worth of debate, assuming that the Conservatives don’t use up a lot of time, which I don’t anticipate they will.

There have been very many bills which have been processed through this Legislature over the last number of weeks which have been given very quick passage, as Bill 103 has and a number of others, and a number will be through negotiations which have taken place by the House leaders. Of course, in delaying bringing the Legislature back the last two sessions, there would have been more than enough time to deal with any and all of the 19 recommendations that were made by the committee dealing with the fire service review.

In terms of that comment, which was a very political comment, if the member wants to be political, you as a government member and your whole side have not been responsible or responsive to the people of Ontario in having this Legislature sit for the time period that is set in the calendar and then, when you pile the legislation on top of us, you don’t want us to take the time to debate it. We’re here willingly debating legislation and we’re prepared to stay as long as we have to.

I would prefer to be in Ottawa dealing with my constituents and spending time with my family, but I certainly do not apologize for coming here to pass Bill 103 on behalf of the firefighters. If this government had other bills which supported firefighters and fire departments, I would be here passing them too.

1750

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have just a few brief remarks on behalf of the Conservative Party. We are supportive of the legislation.

I want to echo the remarks of my predecessor in respect to the way the government has been dealing not only with this issue but other issues in a confrontational atmosphere. Speaking to the minister, I don’t want to have this reflect the minister. He has been most helpful. He’s talked to me on a number of occasions and I

believe to the critic for the Liberal Party as well and indicated that when this legislation came before the House he would indeed acknowledge the support and cooperation of both opposition parties. Of course, we have not heard that indication from his parliamentary assistant.

In fact, initially he queried whether he was going to have the support of the opposition parties when in fact we have worked closely with the minister and have been supportive of this piece of legislation and recognized the concerns especially of volunteer departments across the province, which are very much concerned about the liability aspects and their inability to attract people to a job where indeed they, on many occasions, put their lives on the line. I think that distinguishes them from a multitude of other volunteers in the province.

I know my colleague the member for Carleton has some concerns about this whole question of liability and whether anyone in the province should be exempted from it, even volunteers, but I think there is a distinction when we look at volunteer firefighters who are facing very difficult challenges indeed. The issue my colleague from Carleton raised, we believe, is a concern. I guess we're just going to have to wait and see how it comes out in the wash in terms of the experience with this legislation.

But he is a lawyer. The parliamentary assistant indicated he is not, but my colleague has had courtroom experience with these kinds of cases where indeed the court can assign a percentage of liability. It's quite a common procedure, apparently. It does beg the question: If there's a modest percentage of liability assigned the firefighter, what then occurs in respect to this legislation? How does it translate on an occasion like that? It's certainly something that, if it has not been addressed adequately, the parliamentary assistant will want to take back to the minister and officials within the ministry to ensure that a provision is perhaps incorporated at some future date to cover such a possibility.

We are supportive of this legislation. I want to again echo my friend from Ottawa in terms of the fact that the opposition parties have been generally cooperative with productive legislation. We have a role to fulfil in this Legislature. There was some comment about speaking too much, but as we know, the government brought in rule changes which effectively limited our ability to speak in this Legislature to half an hour. When you look at members of the NDP who spoke when in opposition, we all recall, up to 17 hours non-stop, and now they're telling us half an hour is too much on important pieces of business, we have a great deal of difficulty with that.

In any event, we are supportive of this legislation and want to see it proceed forthwith.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?

Mr Paul Klopp (Huron): I rise and am very supportive of this bill. Some comment was made by opposition colleagues, and I appreciate that they've worked on getting this this far, but I also know there's been hard work by a few of us. I remember this being raised with me by a local councillor back home who said he was at a meeting with the association. I made some phone calls; in fact, I had to dig like heck at the ministry to find out where it was. Howie Hampton, I believe, was in charge at the time. He quickly phoned me and said, "Yes, there is something here."

We talk about how government moves slowly, but I think it also says a lot about this government that we look at things that really do help a lot of average people who work darned hard. That's where it comes from, a bill like this. It finally was a caucus that said, "Listen, this is important to some people," and it doesn't make the big news headlines. In fact, even that ministry itself was somewhat—"Well, you know, let's just leave this here." It's not even on anybody's third priority list, for heaven's sake, or whatever it happens to be.

So I think we've done very well and I appreciate the opposition parties' allowing it to be moved here now, because I know that things can happen, that things get derailed. Believe me, I'm very thankful that you've allowed us to do this. My firemen back home wonder: "Well, aren't you the government? Can't you just do things and ram things through?" I say: "Well, no, you can't. We need cooperation."

It behooves me a little bit when I hear some of the frustration and trying to make such a good news thing and trying to bring up some other problems in this Legislature, but I understand that. It's part of the game. But I assure you, this is no game to the firefighters in my county, and I thank this government very much that we allowed this thing to move somewhat fast compared to where it was when I think of that phone call when I phoned Howie's office that day.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I just want to commend the member for Leeds-Grenville on this particular piece of legislation. It does give me a moment's opportunity to praise the best fire department in the province of Ontario, namely, the fire department of the city of Mississauga. We have a newly appointed fire chief there in Cyril Hare, and he has been one of these people who has literally grown up through the ranks of that particular fire department. I think it says a lot about the former chiefs, in Gord Bentley and his predecessors.

I think when we're dealing with this subject in general, it's one of those services that we all are inclined to take for granted. The personal risks, the tremendous challenge of them never knowing what they're going in to face, and yet the protection there is constant for all of us. I feel the same way about people who choose to serve in our police forces around this

province. They are jobs that, frankly, I would have a great deal of anxiety about any members of my family serving in because of the risks that both police officers and firefighters face on a daily basis. I truly commend the dedicated firefighters around this province and the members of our police forces around this province also. I'm particularly proud of Peel Regional Police Force.

Mr Mills: I would just like to take a moment to respond to the comment made by the member for Leeds-Grenville. While not being privy to the discussions that had taken place between the minister, the Solicitor General and members of the opposition, I think that it would be remiss of me not to recognize the contribution of both the third party and the official opposition in making this bill a success and being able to proceed with it today.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? If there are none, I recognize the honourable member for Carleton.

Mr Sterling: I would like to still get an answer from the parliamentary assistant with regard to my query about liability vis-à-vis a partial liability award, which was mentioned by the—

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Carleton, you're not asking questions now of the honourable parliamentary assistant. We're dealing with questions and answers.

Mr Sterling: I realize that, but I think the issue was raised by the member for Leeds-Grenville—

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs): You have only been here 15 years. Smarten up.

Mr Sterling: —and I think that it begs the question. In most automobile collisions where we would picture a lot of liability arising in terms of dealing with a firefighter, be it a volunteer or a professional firefighter, liability is usually not awarded 100% on one side and 0% on the other side; it's usually split in some way: 30%–70%, 5%–95% or whatever it is. As I read this case, as long as 1% of liability is put to the case of the firefighter, he or she would not be covered for legal expenses.

I think the intent of the bill is to cover, in most cases, the expenses of the firefighter and therefore I'm looking for an answer. I think we should have an answer in terms of passing this legislation before we do pass that legislation.

Mr Mills: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Through you to the member, I believe Hansard will show that I answered the question in my previous two minutes.

The Acting Speaker: That's not a point of order. The honourable member for Leeds-Grenville has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Runciman: I want to thank the parliamentary assistant for acknowledging the cooperation and support

of the opposition parties in the expeditious passage of this legislation.

I don't believe, and I mentioned this in my comments, that the parliamentary assistant has adequately answered the concerns of the member for Carleton. Hopefully, he will convey that concern to officials within the ministry in respect to the question of liability when it's based on a percentage of liability.

Talking about the time that this has taken, the member for Huron mentioned the passage of time. This has been a concern for a number of years, at least, with the volunteer fire departments. I suppose a great deal of that could be attributed to the fact that the office of Solicitor General has been something of a graveyard for politicians over the past seven or eight years. If we go back to the Liberal government, we had Ken Keyes, Mrs Smith—I forget who came after Mrs Smith—scandal after scandal, and then we had Mike Farnan and then Mr Pilkey, again scandal after scandal. He may stand up on a point of order on that one.

In any event, the time of solicitors general over the past two Liberal and the current NDP governments simply has been dominated by scandals involving themselves or their ministries. It's understandable that productive, important legislation like this was put on the back burner by both the Liberal and NDP governments.

But we've had at least a brief reprieve. We've had a Solicitor General in office now for what, three or four months, with no scandal erupting around him, so he has had time to move forward, with the support of the opposition.

Again, we're very supportive of this legislation and look forward to it proceeding.

The Acting Speaker: I want to say to the House that if there is any further debate, we'll have to adjourn the House immediately, because that's the time it is. Do we have unanimous agreement to put the question now? Agreed.

Mr Mills has moved second reading of Bill 103. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Agreed.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Shelley Martel (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): If I might advise the House of the order of business for tomorrow, I'll be very quick. We do third reading of Bill 103; third reading of Bill 4, the education omnibus bill; third reading of Bill 61 involving Toronto Islands; third reading of Bill 38, Sunday shopping; and second reading of Bill 42, stable farm funding.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): It now being after 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1804.

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Third Session, 35th Parliament

**Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario**

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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 21 July 1993

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des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 21 juillet 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



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Wednesday 21 July 1993

The House met at 1334.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TOURISM

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): Yesterday I told the House of an administrative problem plaguing the St Lawrence Parks Commission at a time when tourism is suffering in eastern Ontario as a result of this government's inability to appreciate the work of the private sector in promoting tourism.

Any member who has sailed in eastern Ontario during the past 30 years will remember the presence of the Stormont Yacht Club on the St Lawrence River at Long Sault. Commodore Bill Girard has spoken to me about the extensive delays in renewing the lease on the land. The government has assured the club that the lease would be approved in March, and then in July. The \$200,000 project promises construction jobs in my riding, but the approval is needed so construction can start in September. The 160 members of the club, who bring many tourists from all over Ontario, are wondering what the holdup is.

There is more. Lynn MacDonell of Cornwall has been attempting to negotiate with the parks commission over her popular paddleboat concession lease, which expired some nine months ago. The parks commission dragged its feet until June, when they told her that after four years of successful operation, she now had to fulfil several new requirements. Questioning why it took so long to inform her of the new policy, she was told that the parks commission had many more important things to do.

I would ask the minister to negotiate the reopening of the park by considering every alternative and appreciating the work of the private sector in promoting tourism.

WEST CARLETON MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): It is my great pleasure to inform the Ontario Legislature that the township of West Carleton will be holding the official opening of its new municipal offices and council chambers on Saturday, July 24, 1993.

The building is truly unique in its design and construction, in the democratic and consultative manner in which it was built, and with its prudent financing.

Mayor Roland Armitage and the councillors of West Carleton—Sue Lebrun, Dan MacMillan, Egbert Reitsma, Dwight Eastman, Orville Kemp and John Caldwell—together with clerk Bruce Leclaire, treasurer James Raycroft, engineering supervisor Brian Carry and secretary Janet Stanton, formed a building committee which also included volunteer residents Sheila Laughlin and Oliver Drerup.

They envisaged a building that would be sensitive to the unique history of eastern Ontario, that would reflect the rich heritage of overall buildings in the township, that would be state-of-the-art with respect to the building structure as well as the operating systems, and, most important, that would be a friendly building that encouraged open access to all.

Their success in conveying their dream and working with the architects, Barry J. Hobin and Associates, has resulted in a most distinctive building that looks as welcome as the old homestead, yet is as functional as any modern office tower. Members of this House will be impressed with the fact that the project was completed under budget.

I ask members of this assembly to join me in extending well-deserved congratulations to Mayor Roly Armitage and the people of West Carleton.

BICYCLES

Mr Robert Frankford (Scarborough East): It's gratifying to see more and more bicycles on our streets as a daily method of transportation. They are cost-effective and energy-efficient. Bicycle transportation is in keeping with low-impact, mixed-use urban design. Bicycles are a self-sufficient technology. They're easily and inexpensively repaired and maintained.

Jane Jacobs details in her book *The Economy of Cities* how the Japanese industrial economy developed from bicycle maintenance, producing import replacement.

Bicycles are economically viable. They require very little additional infrastructure and cost very little to buy, store and maintain relative to other modes of transportation. A particular benefit is the recycling of bicycles that would otherwise have been scrapped, thereby adding to our problems of solid waste.

Combining these benefits with a wish to encourage fitness and recreation has led to some community initiatives that I would like to recognize.

The Cabbagetown Bike Club in Regent Park has been an outstanding success in the past three years, helping youth, women and displaced workers refurbish and use bicycles. In my riding of Scarborough East, a project called *Recycle Cycle* has developed from modest beginnings in Metro Housing through the initiative of community residents David Hisson and O'bert Puck. It has now moved into an underutilized industrial area. Not only are they keeping local children occupied; they're also helping the police with bicycle maintenance.

These and other projects are linking to form a community bike network involving community centres and organizations across Metro. I would encourage the

ministries of Environment and Energy, Transportation, and Culture, Tourism and Recreation to support this admirable grass-roots initiative. As an indication of the growing importance of the economic benefits, there is going to be a Bikes Mean Business conference in October which will further add to this important work.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr Robert Chiarelli (Ottawa West): In May of this year, NDP minister Evelyn Gigantes promised Ottawa-Carleton elected officials that legislation reforming Ottawa-Carleton government was going to cabinet in May, to be introduced in the Legislature in June for first and second readings. She expressly acknowledged that we had a time problem. However, the Ottawa-Carleton legislation was not on the list disclosed today by NDP House leader Brian Charlton of legislation to be dealt with before the summer recess.

Anything short of introducing a bill for first and second reading is a broken commitment. It is clear that the NDP has cold feet and is not prepared to commit to legislation to date.

The government has left little time for local officials and the public to establish new ward boundaries before the January deadline. Delaying the legislation is grossly unfair to candidates for election, who will be forced to make last-minute decisions, because they have no ward boundaries, and won't for some time, no salary levels and indeed no redefined powers for the regional and local levels.

The NDP government has again created needless confusion. Simply providing Ottawa-Carleton with draft proposals, as is expected for tomorrow, represents another failure of leadership by the member for Ottawa Centre, Evelyn Gigantes.

1340

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): Today in the media we see that the social contract agreements are falling into place, but only with last-minute chaos and the government abandoning several of its ill-conceived restrictions.

For example, it would appear that the government has finally recognized what municipalities have been saying and what the Progressive Conservatives have been saying: that you have to give municipalities the flexibility to make their own cuts.

We indicated that municipalities must be allowed to manage without having union participation legislated on to them. We indicated that municipal and provincial fiscal years are different and that the social contract must recognize this difference. We indicated that a \$30,000 salary ceiling would not work, as the majority of small municipalities have employees who earn less than this amount and therefore there would be no salary concessions.

First, the government tried to spend its way out of a deficit problem. Too late, they realized this approach would not work. Finally, with virtually no consultation, they imposed the social contract process on municipalities and other partners. The end result is poor legislation.

Municipalities and other partners have suffered through a process that has been arbitrary, uncertain and unworkable, and ultimately the government will fail in its prime objective to receive \$2 billion in cuts through the social contract to reduce the deficit.

HOME COUNTY FOLK FESTIVAL

Mr David Winninger (London South): I rise in the House today to recognize an event in London which enhances the cultural life of our province. I refer to London's Home County Folk Festival, which celebrated its 20th anniversary last weekend.

Folk artists who got their start at the Home County Folk Festival in London include Joni Mitchell, Valdy and the late Stan Rogers.

Run completely by volunteers, the festival is one of the few left in Canada that do not charge admission. It attracts more than 30,000 visitors from Canada and the United States each year.

In addition to the best in Canadian folk music, this year's festival featured 10 different dance groups, performing everything from Latin American rhythms to Scottish reels. There was a record number of performers, over 35, and more than 145 craft booths. The weekend began Thursday night and continued till Sunday to accommodate all the performances.

I congratulate the Home County Folk League, organizers of the festival, on the 20th birthday of this event. Deepest appreciation is extended to the league chair, Rob Brady, the festival publicist, Kathryn Hazel, booths coordinator Judy Morris, the monthly Hoot Night supporter Dennis Humble, over 180 volunteers and thousands of enthusiastic patrons for the ongoing success of London's Home County Folk Festival.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): Married couples are sometimes faced with difficult decisions, especially when one of them is forced to live in a long-term care facility.

How the new fee increases in these facilities are calculated is influenced by how pensions and other income is calculated for each partner. This can have a dramatic impact on the increased fees the NDP is demanding as of July 1, 1993.

Some couples who have lived together for decades are now being forced to live apart, not by choice but of necessity in order to afford these increases. Some seniors are considering having their status changed to involuntarily separated.

The reality of asking government for a separation

definition for financial reasons only is putting added stress on these couples. However, for couples who take this step there may be compelling financial reasons. The recent announced fee increases are based solely on the income of the single resident, and by asking the government to process the involuntary separation it may increase an individual's chances for supplement benefits, especially if they have no private income.

This means that the spouse in the facility will be judged on their income at the lowest level, below the arbitrary rate of \$15,377 per annum that the Minister of Health has said will make you eligible for the lower fee increase.

At this point, we have been told by the Ministry of Health that the spouse's income will not be tested, only that of the spouse in the facility. This is a good news and bad news scenario: Separate from your spouse and you'll save money. For many seniors who have been married for decades, this is simply something they cannot do. Their marriage vows are too sacred a trust, something this NDP government has forgotten.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): On July 14, I listened with a great deal of interest to the remarks made by the Conservative Party in respect of the second reading debate of Bill 79, the Employment Equity Act.

As I listened to the debate, I began to wonder if suddenly I was living in a time warp of some 100 years ago. I was reminded of things in the past as I listened to the Conservative government suggesting that Bill 79 would shut out a generation or more of young people who have been told that they have no future in this province through the provisions of Bill 79.

This goofy assumption is nothing less than a colossal putdown of young people in this province and their future. My own 16-year-old granddaughter has told me that she found the comments made by the Conservatives offensive. I've also listened with interest to the Conservative member who stated that he was personally concerned about his own family's lack of opportunities in this province.

I say to you, look back to the 42 years of rule of that party over there. You could not get a job anywhere in this province. You couldn't get appointed to a licence bureau, you couldn't work for the beer stores, you couldn't work for the liquor stores, you couldn't work for the Ministry of Transport; you could do absolutely nothing unless you were anointed by that party that was the government at the day. As I stand in my place today, that is the God's truth.

LANDFILL

Mr Charles Beer (York North): A week ago today, together with my leader, Lyn McLeod, and the member for York Centre, Greg Sorbara, we spent a good part of the day in the region of York visiting the—

The Speaker: Would the member for Durham East please come to order. Just relax.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I ask the House to come to order. We are making an effort to keep the temperature low. The honourable member for York North may wish to begin again. We will start the clock again.

Mr Beer: A week ago, as I was saying, the Leader of the Opposition, Mrs McLeod, and the member for York Centre, Mr Sorbara, and I spent the day in York region visiting with a number of groups around the different dump sites. If the feeling which was just exhibited in this room is any measure, I can tell you that the feeling of those who are affected by the potential dump sites is even hotter, and those feelings of wanting to see a change in the government policy are as strong as ever.

It's now been over a full year since the government went forward with its very flawed process of the Interim Waste Authority and said that there shall be a dump in York region which is supposed to not only handle York region's garbage but also Metropolitan Toronto's.

Again, what the people of the region are saying is very simple. They want a full and fair environmental assessment which is going to look at all of the various sites and proposals. That has not happened. Bill 143 remains one of the worst pieces of legislation that has come forward to this Legislature, and it is directing that York region is going to have to take Metropolitan Toronto's garbage.

What people were still saying to us, as we toured the sites last week, is that we've got to continue to be vigilant, we've got to continue to fight. The commitment that we have made, not only to the people of York region but to Peel and to Durham, is that as a government we would not put them through the kind of miserable and botched process which this government has. We're going to ensure that those megadumps simply don't happen.

1350

ROYAL ASSENT

SANCTION ROYALE

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in his office.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): The following are the titles of the bills to which His Honour did assent:

Bill 9, An Act to amend the Representation Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la représentation électorale

Bill 25, An Act to authorize borrowing on the credit of the Consolidated Revenue Fund / Loi autorisant des emprunts garantis par le Trésor

Bill 87, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to Firefighters / Loi modifiant le Code de la route relativement aux pompiers

Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre

Bill 164, An Act to amend the Insurance Act and certain other Acts in respect of Automobile Insurance and other Insurance Matters / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les assurances et certaines autres lois en ce qui concerne l'assurance-automobile et d'autres questions d'assurance.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): It's my pleasure to rise in the House today to make a statement regarding the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, the new agency which our government has created to lead the reform of the labour force training and adjustment system in Ontario.

This is an historic day because it is the culmination of one of this government's most important undertakings. For the first time in North America, users of the training and adjustment system, the people who know it best, will manage the system. OTAB will bring Ontario to the forefront of labour market development by adapting proven models from western European training systems.

The launching of OTAB today is critical to the future prosperity of our province. The concept of cooperation and partnership in the way we develop our labour force will now become a fact of life.

I am pleased today to announce the names of the people who will lead this important initiative, the men and women who will comprise OTAB's board of directors. This leadership is very important to Ontario because OTAB will be charged with the significant responsibilities that are absolutely central to our economic future and the strength of our social fabric.

Let me quickly describe the job ahead for OTAB. Just yesterday in this House, we gave Bill 96 third reading. We stand now at the beginning of an exciting new process for training Ontario's workers and helping them adjust to economic and technological change. Our current array of programs and services will be gathered together from the various ministries where they are now scattered and transferred to OTAB. A single coordinated partnership of representatives of the labour market will organize and focus these programs and services.

The result of this focus will be a more efficient system because of the elimination of overlaps and duplication. It will be a more responsive system because it will be based directly on the needs of the people the system is intended to assist. OTAB will also make sure

it is a straightforward and much simpler system so that employers, workers and potential workers can avail themselves of it more easily.

We are doing more than just fine-tuning; we are striving to foster a new training culture. We are sharing power with our labour market partners to ensure that an emphasis on our people and the working skills they possess is the foundation on which we build and sustain our economy.

OTAB will make Ontario attractive to investment and job creation with its highly skilled workforce, OTAB will strengthen our traditional industries by assisting their shift to higher value-added goods and services, and OTAB will ensure our competitiveness and success in a knowledge-based economy that depends on the ideas and innovation of its workforce.

It is with a tremendous sense of satisfaction, with real pride and with a very sincere belief that we are taking a historic step that I wish to inform the House that all our labour market partners have nominated an excellent team of people to lead OTAB.

The government has been presented with the names of eight representatives of business, eight representatives of labour, one representative from each for women, for racial minorities, for people with disabilities and for francophones, and two representatives for educators and trainers.

I'm pleased to advise the House that we have with us in the gallery today the two people who are proposed as co-chairs of OTAB's board of directors: Mr Don Gree, representing business, and Mr Glenn Pattinson, representing labour.

These nominations will of course be reviewed by the public appointments process, but I wish to emphasize that it is our labour market partners themselves who have made these selections. They are handpicked by their peers and not by government.

This careful selection process has been based on the government's request that our partners make sure that the composition of the OTAB board of directors would reflect the diversity of Ontario. We asked them to submit names of people from both genders as well as from various geographic regions, economic sectors, occupations, cultural backgrounds, with a wide variety of experience and physical capacities, and so on. That was our stipulation. We wanted a true cross-section of Ontario that could ensure fair treatment for all Ontarians.

This government fully supports the nomination of the 22 men and women. I would also like to offer my thanks to our partners for the effort they have made to get us to this landmark day for Ontario. I wish to thank the labour market partners' steering committees, who have engaged with us for a year and a half on this ambitious undertaking.

These committees worked with the government, they worked with each other and they worked within their own communities to build a consensus, to open up dialogue, to spell out what was important to them and to listen and learn about what others felt was important. They are the real leaders of OTAB and I hope that the way we enlisted their help to develop Bill 96 signals an evolution in the way we, as elected representatives, do our jobs.

I would especially like to acknowledge the effort of my colleague from Hamilton West, the Honourable Richard Allen, who really provided the leadership.

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs): He's not here.

Hon Mr Cooke: He was here. I think all labour market partners appreciate his vital contribution, for which we all thank him.

I also wish to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of my parliamentary assistant from Kingston and The Islands, Mr Gary Wilson, whose assistance has been of great help during the clause-by-clause review of the bill as well as during the committee of the whole.

I wish to conclude by returning to the labour market partner nominees, the human face of OTAB, because they are the ones we will look to in the coming years. They will face the challenge of fashioning a superb system of programs and services to ensure Ontario has a highly skilled workforce. In doing so, they will shape our continued prosperity, ensure opportunity and fair access to all Ontarians and support for our economic recovery. The new partnership will help us meet the challenges for the future.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I'm very pleased to tell this House that I have designated five new agreements as sectoral frameworks under the Social Contract Act. In total, these frameworks and those already designated will allow local agreements to be worked out that will benefit roughly 350,000 of Ontario's public sector workers. We have tentative agreements that will create a framework for another 250,000 workers. In total, these agreements when fully accepted would cover two thirds of public sector workers in this province.

These historic agreements grew out of our fair and balanced approach to meeting Ontario's needs. These agreements save thousands of jobs in communities across Ontario, they protect the rights of the lowest-paid workers, they preserve the vital services that the people of this province value, they create new and better ways of providing these services and they bring a new openness and accountability into the public sector.

The agreements which I have just signed create frameworks for municipal workers, for police, for

utilities, for the Ontario Provincial Police and for Ontario Hydro. Together these agreements go a long way towards helping us meet our target of \$2 billion in savings this fiscal year. The agreements also benefit those who participate in them. By reaching agreement, as the Social Contract Act spells out, employers have their savings targets lowered.

Each of the sectors in the public service is unique and so each agreement also has unique features. The revised target for the broad municipal sector which includes municipal workers, police forces and utilities, totals \$220 million a year over the three years of the Social Contract Act. Because municipalities are already more than halfway through their fiscal year, we have deferred \$50 million of this target for 1993-94, but those funds will be recouped at the end of the three years of the agreement. There is no change in the total targets, except for an overall lowering to reflect the fact that this sector reached an agreement.

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In this sector, we have also allowed for local bargaining agents to negotiate agreements under which workers who earn less than \$30,000 a year would contribute to the cost savings. I stress that this would be the choice of local bargaining agents as a way of protecting the jobs of low-income workers who would otherwise be permanently laid off. The Social Contract Act expressly forbids employers from unilaterally imposing social contract measures on low-income workers. By allowing this negotiated participation, we are providing greater flexibility to meet targets without loss of jobs or services.

The agreement for the Ontario Provincial Police allows for meeting the full savings target of \$14.4 million. At the request of negotiators, we will release details of this agreement once it is accepted locally.

Our agreement with Ontario Hydro, which employs almost 30,000 people, reflects the stringent cost-cutting measures which the utility has already taken as part of a major restructuring. The assigned target of \$100 million for Hydro is currently being met by its existing program, which will benefit Hydro's ratepayers. Hydro itself will address further compensation questions in its discussions with workers' bargaining agents as part of its normal collective agreement process.

These social contract agreements, and others already reached, call for a contribution from public sector workers, just as we have already asked others in Ontario to contribute to the solution of our fiscal problems through our expenditure control plan and revenue increases.

Our three-pronged attack on our rising debt reflects our very real belief that everyone in Ontario can help in the solution. It is not up to teachers alone or nurses or business people or government workers or any one group; it is up to all of us. We all have something to

contribute. The people in Ontario and the people who worked so hard to reach these agreements recognize the validity of this fair and balanced approach.

I would like to thank everyone involved in reaching agreements under the social contract and to express my hope that I will soon be able to report similar success in the sectors which are still at the table.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I want to respond first to the statement by the Minister of Education and Training, to say that there's no doubt in anyone's mind that this is a fundamentally important area.

I'm pleased that the board is here today to hear these comments, because I think the legislation is clear that our party has a problem with the board. We are concerned about ending and truncating the lifelong learning that we think should be going on by setting up an independent arm's-length agency. I appreciate that these 22 people are probably very talented. I don't know them at all, but I don't doubt that they're a very talented group. But we think it's fundamentally wrong to set this up as an independent arm's-length agency.

The minister's announcement today, in the background material, indicates why we're concerned. It says that all OTAB directors must bring their labour market views to the table. We think that's partially important, but we think they should be bringing more than just those views to the table. We think it's, as I say, a fundamental mistake to set this up as an independent arm's-length agency where the 22 delegates will be coming essentially to represent their interest groups.

I hope it will work. You have our concerns. You have our best wishes, because if there is an important area that we're trying to deal with, it's this one.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I want to now turn to the Minister of Finance's comments on the social contract, to say that I think he's outlined clearly for the House the concerns now fully before us that many of us have had with the legislation. We have two major concerns, one I'll talk about second, and that is that the \$2-billion target seems to be sliding away very quickly. More importantly, we see in the minister's statement a complete reversal of many of the things we thought the government was proposing in this bill.

We now find that people earning less than \$30,000 can be negatively impacted. You stood in the House and said this was a fundamental part of the bill. You promised the people of Ontario they would not be negatively impacted, and now you have personally signed sectoral agreements that negatively impact people earning less than \$30,000.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): No, you are wrong.

Mr Phillips: I'm just saying you went back on what you said was in the legislation—

Hon Mr Laughren: You are wrong. You are dead wrong.

Mr Phillips: The minister says I'm wrong, but the agreements that you're indicating today can negatively impact people earning less than \$30,000.

The second thing I would say is that several times we raised the question about how you're going to get the money out of Hydro. Now we find \$100 million of your target you won't be getting, not just this year but next year and the year after, \$300 million that you had promised you won't be getting from Hydro.

We also find now that of the \$2-billion target, \$100 million is gone from Hydro, we now see from the municipal sector \$50 million gone, and following the same logic you have in here, there's no doubt that you will see another at least \$100 million from the educational sector gone. So now we see clearly at least \$250 million of the \$2-billion target gone.

I'd also say that the Premier promised that we would see some confirmation of where the \$500 million on the pensions was coming from. We've yet to see it. We've yet to see that confirmation. We passed the legislation without that confirmation, and an important ingredient of this was the \$500 million.

I would say to the Minister of Finance that this statement today confirms that we have lost at least \$250 million of your \$2-billion target, gone completely, acknowledged in this statement, and we furthermore have some questions about the pension. We would ask the Minister of Finance and the Premier to come forward with the confirmation that in fact the \$500 million that you are assuming will be saved will be saved. So I would say that what we have now in the statement is confirmation of the concerns that many of us raised.

Finally, the Minister of Finance has acknowledged that the municipalities and the school boards were well into the year and would have difficulty in funding the complete savings. He acknowledged that finally. The \$30,000 cutoff for low-income earners has been thrown aside, so the protection that you promised those people is gone, and you have now signed two sectoral agreements that get rid of that. Now we find Hydro, where you had counted on \$100 million of savings, won't be there.

This is exactly what we predicted would happen when you introduced the flawed social contract legislation. It's all coming true.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I too want to comment on the Treasurer's statement today concerning a number of the agreements. You know, the Treasurer and the Premier have told us that \$2 billion has to be cut: It's important, it's imperative, every nickel of that

is significant for the financial integrity of the province. You told a million public sector workers and their families they had to pony up, they had to contribute or the province was going to go bankrupt. It was that critical; it was that important; it was that urgent. Then, as has been pointed out by the critic from the Liberal Party, we see exception after exception after exception after exception after exception.

The Treasurer talked about a three-pronged attack on the deficit. He said public sector workers are one of the prongs, \$2 billion. We've now seen erosions of that of over a quarter of a billion dollars a year. Over \$250 million a year has now been off that target. Plus, there is no question, if you're going to exempt the grid for health care workers, I'd like to see how you're going to explain the \$100-million exemption with no exemption for teachers for their grid.

I'd like to be in that negotiating meeting when you explain to teachers: "Oh well, that was nurses. We'll give them the increments on the grid, but not teachers." So we're now closing in on a half a billion—

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): The teachers are not negotiating.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Harris: Well, teachers don't want to sit down and negotiate this flawed—

Hon Mr Wildman: Don't you think they should negotiate?

Mr Harris: "We'll punish those guys. We'll punish them because of that." What absolute nonsense.

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The \$30,000 principle: I listened to the Treasurer interject and say: "We haven't violated the \$30,000 principle. Well, maybe we've violated it, but only to save their jobs."

Interjection.

Mr Harris: Well, that's your statement. It says here "to save their jobs." "Those who earn less than \$30,000 will contribute now as a means"—he stresses—"to save their jobs."

That's why we moved the amendment to Bill 48, to allow those making \$30,000 a year to save their jobs. We told you that you had to do that, and you and the Liberals said, "No, we won't support that amendment." Now you're doing it anyway and you've got a flawed bill out there for those making less than \$30,000.

Every time you stand up in the House, you say one thing one day, one thing the next day. In your first budget you said: "We want a big deficit. The bigger it is, the better it'll be, the more people will get back to work." Then all of a sudden you say, "No, no, we've got to get the deficit under control."

Your lack of consistency is what is scaring people out

of this province. It's your lack of consistency that's scaring investment, that's scaring jobs, that's scaring hope, that's scaring opportunity out of this province. You never cease to amaze me with the new inconsistencies you come forward with.

The three-pronged attack started out with a \$2-billion tax hike, \$2 billion back from public sector workers and \$2 billion in cutbacks in your own spending. We looked at your budget. You increased your own spending and you're making announcements every day of how you're going to spend new money.

Secondly, the social contract coming out of the wage package. We see exemption after exemption. You call it slippage. "Slippage" is the new word. Your slippage is showing, Treasurer. It's slippage. Now we're left with a one-pronged attack, the taxpayer. We're back to the taxpayer. That's the one thing we know: The taxpayer is in for \$2 billion and the taxpayer will be in again to make up for your slippage.

You are a disgrace, your government, your cabinet, your Treasurer, your lack of consistency. You are a disgrace and you are hurting seriously the credibility of this province.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): I'm pleased to comment on the OTAB statement here today. It's ironic that this government is standing up and saying "We need more training, we need more skills," and at the same time it's saying to nurses and teachers, "You're going to be cut back." The people who have already got the skills and the training, they're going to be cutting back on their salaries.

It's also interesting to note that in the very last sentence, this minister says, "They will shape our continued prosperity." I want to tell you, Mr Minister, the people of this province don't think there's prosperity, and quite frankly, it's a direct result of this NDP government that we don't have prosperity in the province of Ontario.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): My question is to the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance presented a budget in this House two months ago in which he said that he needed and was fully counting on \$2 billion worth of savings that would be achieved in this fiscal year, 1993-94, as a result of his much-talked-about social contract.

Yesterday and today, the Treasurer has admitted that he is experiencing some slippage in the \$2-billion saving that he said he needed to keep this year's deficit at \$9.2 billion. Will the Treasurer tell the people of Ontario today precisely how much slippage and how many millions of dollars he has lost on this \$2-billion budgetary requirement for this fiscal year?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I will respond to the member for Renfrew North, who one day doesn't want us to engage in this process and achieve these savings and the next day is complaining because we're not achieving the savings. However, I will respond to the question that the member puts to me.

When we started the process, we indicated that we were breaking it up into sectors and, in total, we wanted to achieve \$2 billion in public sector compensation. Since that process began, there is one major area where we will not achieve the target that we set out at the beginning; that is, with Ontario Hydro. Ontario Hydro, though, I should tell the member opposite, will achieve more than the \$100 million in compensation per year for the next three years; so it's going to save more than was the target, and that will benefit ratepayers all across this province.

Hon Mr Laughren: The other area, and I want to give a complete response to the member for Renfrew North, is the municipal sector, where we had a certain target for each year of the next three years, as with other sectors. Because of the municipalities being on a calendar basis versus the province being on a fiscal-year basis ending March 31, what we said to the municipalities was that we are not going to alter the target for their savings, but in recognition—and I'm sure fairminded members of this assembly would want us to do this; I'm sure they would want us to do this—for this year we will allow \$50 million to be deferred. We still get it, but we don't get it until the first quarter of 1996.

The total slippage, as the member refers to it, not as I refer to it, totals \$80 million, because we achieve \$20 million coming to us from Ontario Hydro anyway, and the \$50 million in the municipal sector, which is a deferral, will not be achieved this year.

Mr Conway: My supplementary concerns the Treasurer's budget, of which the social contract savings of \$2 billion for this year were a central part. The May 19 budget makes no reference to what's going on at Hydro or on the moon. It talks about a first-order requirement, in this fiscal year, to get \$2 billion worth of savings.

My Liberal colleagues and I have done an analysis of the deals that you people have made to date. Our conservative calculation is that in three deals and in three sectors alone—Hydro, the municipal sector and the health sector—you have already surrendered \$200 million worth of savings this year; so your negotiators, by our very conservative accounting of what you have done to date, have already surrendered or abandoned 10% of the targeted requirement for this fiscal year.

My question to the Treasurer is, how and where do you intend, in this fiscal year, to make up that difference? Do you intend to run the \$9.2-billion deficit higher or, God forbid, do you intend to add even more

to the \$2-billion tax increase which you imposed in this budget of May 19?

Hon Mr Laughren: I know that I'm supposed to answer the questions, not ask them, so I'll refrain from asking the member for Renfrew North how it is that one day he's saying we shouldn't be extracting money from Ontario Hydro and the next day he's flailing away at us because we recognize the contribution that Ontario Hydro has already made in the compensation package to its employees. There's a remarkable amount of inconsistency.

Also, I hope that the member for Renfrew North doesn't expect us to buy into Liberal accounting. We saw what that did during the 1980s.

1420

Mr Conway: No answer to my questions about his government's policy. It's your budget, and your budget made plain that you had to have \$2 billion worth of social contract savings in this fiscal year, 1993-94, if you were going to keep the ballooning deficit to \$9.2 billion.

Your negotiators and your fellow social contractors, in their pathetic effort to "Let's make a deal" have clearly, in three sectors, in health and in Hydro and in the municipal sector have already surrendered, at the very least, \$200 million worth of savings this year. You have already, by this account, given up 10% of the \$2-billion social contract requirement that you said you needed to have this year.

My question to you remains, and the taxpayers of Ontario will want to know, since they would want me to believe you to be an honourable man, where and how do you intend, in this year, to make up the hundreds of millions of dollars that you have already lost in your effort to make deals at Hydro, in the health sector and in the municipal sector?

Hon Mr Laughren: This comes from the party that didn't even want a bill brought before this Legislature. They just wanted to negotiate and negotiate and negotiate for ever and ever and ever and be flexible, flexible, flexible. That's what the Liberal Party wanted.

I would say to the member for Renfrew North that I've already detailed the amount of money that will not be achieved through the social contract. One is the \$80 million from Ontario Hydro, which, I might add, is being saved because that's going to be reflected in the freeze on rates, and I would ask the Liberals what they did with hydro rates when they were in office for five years. We have tackled a very serious problem. The other part of the social contract target that will not be achieved this year, but will be achieved, is the \$50 million.

He keeps talking about hundreds of millions of dollars, and I'm not surprised that the Liberals talk in those kinds of terms, because that's the way they talked

when they were in government as well.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Second question.

Mr Conway: The Liberal Party of Ontario said that your social contract policy was an unworkable, unachievable, muddled mess—

The Speaker: Would the member place his second question, please.

Mr Conway: —and it is becoming more and more apparent with every passing day that it is that and probably worse.

The Speaker: Does the member have a second question?

Mr Conway: In my view, this social contract is a fat, pregnant Trojan Horse that is going to give birth in this place to calamity.

The Speaker: Will the member please take his seat.

Mr Conway: My second question, Mr Speaker—

The Speaker: Would the member take his seat.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member with his second question.

Mr Conway: My second question is to the Minister of Finance: I have in my hand the municipal agreement that I gather the Treasurer, the Minister of Finance, has in recent moments authorized. Reading this municipal agreement, I can scarcely believe my eyes to read that in section 2.7, it is very clear that Bob Rae's social contract policy is going to affect all public servants in that sector irrespective of whether or not they earn \$20,000 a year or \$90,000 a year.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): False.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): Read it again.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Conway: It couldn't be clearer from a reading of this particular agreement. I want to ask the Minister of Finance how this can be so.

Hon Floyd Laughren: I know that the member for Renfrew North is frustrated and angry that we are achieving these sectoral agreements, because he didn't think we would ever be able to do it. The fact is that we are reaching voluntary agreements.

If I could address specifically—and I hope he'll give me the time to do this, Mr Speaker—the municipal agreement that was signed voluntarily by representatives of employees, the municipalities themselves and the government negotiating team, that agreement allows people at the local level, if they voluntarily agree at the local level, that in order to prevent permanent layoffs of people who earn under \$30,000, they can voluntarily agree to be part of the social contract savings in a municipality.

There is nothing—nothing—in the agreement that imposes anything on anybody earning under \$30,000. If people at the local level do not want to be part of this sectoral agreement, they don't have to be part of it. They can resort to the fail-safe mechanism that begins on August 1.

Mr Conway: We now have two agreements, the municipal agreement and the community services agreement, where it is absolutely clear that workers, public servants, who are earning below \$30,000 a year will be exposed to the impacts of this policy. It couldn't be clearer.

My supplementary question—to St Bob Rae, who comes in here to object but won't answer questions—my question to the Minister of Finance: Given those agreements and given the exposure that the under-\$30,000 workers are going to face, how do you square that with your statement to this Legislature on June 14, when you introduced the legislation, that this legislation "exempts all public sector employees making less than \$30,000 a year"?

How do you further explain that St Bob Rae, on June 19, spent \$84,000 of the taxpayers' money—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the member for Renfrew North please take his chair.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the member please be seated. I realize that the honourable member has a very serious question which he's posing. I know also that the member is aware of the practice in our chamber of referring to other members of the assembly either by the name of their constituency or by the title they hold, and I know that the honourable member would want to maintain that historic tradition. Could he please pose his question.

Mr Conway: I appreciate the advice and I will withdraw the reference to the saintliness of the member for York South.

The Premier of this province spent \$84,000 on June 19 to take out government advertising to tell the people of Ontario, and I quote one line, "I, Bob Rae, want to point out that this social contract law protects public workers who earn below \$30,000 a year." That was a solemn promise that he made and that you repeated. It is clear from these two agreements that you have broken that promise and that you have broken faith with those public servants. Do you not agree?

Hon Mr Laughren: In response to the dyspeptic dilettante from Renfrew North, I would simply say that the ad to which he refers deals specifically with Bill 48, the Social Contract Act. The Social Contract Act does indeed completely protect people earning under \$30,000 a year. What the member is referring to today is a voluntary sectoral agreement worked out between the

municipalities, the employees of the municipalities and the government, which if people—

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): Do you hang them out to dry if you have an agreement?

The Speaker: Order, the member for Willowdale.

Hon Mr Laughren: —at the local level wish to have themselves—who earn under \$30,000—as part of the savings targeted for that municipality, they can do so if they voluntarily agree to do so. Nothing, absolutely nothing, has been changed with Bill 48.

The law referred to in that advertisement is strictly an agreement which allows people to voluntarily agree to do that rather than be subjected to permanent layoffs. If the member for Renfrew North would rather see people laid off than protected in this way, let him stand in his place and say so.

Mr Conway: Yesterday, it was bad-faith bargaining on the part of this government, and today it is clearly a case of, at the very least, misleading advertising. It's your policy, it's your legislation, it's your commitment, it's your advertisement, and it couldn't be clearer, and you have broken faith and you have misled these people for whatever reason. If you didn't know what you were doing two months ago, if you didn't figure this out, then that's your problem, not the problem of the opposition and not the problem of the working men and women of this province.

Does the Treasurer still not understand that these agreements that have come to light in the municipal sector and in the community services sector clearly expose people earning less than \$30,000 a year to the impact of the social policy, and that this exposure is a complete and flagrant contradiction of the solemn promise that he made on June 14 and that the Premier has made and repeated across the province for the past number of weeks?

1430

Hon Mr Laughren: We could get into a debate about who's misleading whom, but I can tell the member opposite that absolutely nothing has changed in regard to that advertisement or Bill 48. Absolutely nothing has changed.

I said right from the beginning of this exercise that the best agreements were ones that would be worked out voluntarily prior to August 1. No one is imposing anything on anyone earning under \$30,000, and it will not affect anyone under \$30,000 unless they voluntarily, through their bargaining agents, agree to this and say, "We would prefer this to permanent layoffs."

The member for Renfrew North hasn't yet replied to my challenge to stand in his place and say that he'd rather see people earning under \$30,000 laid off than voluntarily be part of the social contract savings.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I'd like to come back to the Treasurer and follow up with just exactly

how much your slippage is showing. Can you confirm for us today that you planned to get \$100 million from Ontario Hydro and now you plan to get zero from Ontario Hydro; \$100 million which you're going to spend on something else, which, as far as the deficit's concerned, is zero?

Let's talk about how much the deficit's getting here. One hundred million dollars was going to go on the deficit from Hydro; today it's zero. As well, \$55 million has now been deferred beyond the three-year period to the municipal sector, well beyond your mandate and any prediction that any one of 10 million Ontarians think you'll be in government beyond that period of time. That's \$155 million.

Then we have \$50 million that's a little signing bonus for the municipal sector. Then we have \$53 million that you're now saying can carry on in the grid with the health care workers.

That comes to over a quarter of a billion dollars of slippage that is showing. Can you confirm that what we are talking about to date in your agreements is over \$250 million, or do you refute any one or any part of those numbers I've given you?

Hon Floyd Laughren: I said in response to the first question from the official opposition that Hydro was going to achieve its compensation savings separate from this social contract—

Mr Harris: Oh, so they're going to give you the money.

Hon Mr Laughren: Allow me to finish—and pass on those savings to its ratepayers.

The purpose of the whole exercise is to reduce public sector compensation by \$2 billion. That's going to be achieved not to the consolidated revenue fund, I acknowledge. I said that right at the beginning.

Secondly, in the municipal sector, the roughly \$50 million that will be deferred will not be achieved this year as savings for the government. That's absolutely correct.

No other targets have been altered for the other sectors. As a matter of fact, the municipal sector target hasn't been altered either; it's simply that that has been deferred by one quarter and will not be achieved this fiscal year, but that'll still be a saving in public sector compensation. It just will be put off until the beginning of 1996 in order to be fair to the municipalities. The leader of the third party, I suspect, would agree that this was a more thoughtful and fair way of doing it than to simply demand that \$50 million in this year, the part of the year that's left for the municipalities. I thought it was exercising good judgement and flexibility.

Mr Harris: I assume, in terms of the others you haven't commented on, that you agree that amount of slippage is showing.

I'd like to come back to Hydro. You say that the

wage bill will be cut under a plan that Hydro has but that you will not get the money, which gets me to the fundamental reason for a social contract in the first place.

We were told it was for the financial integrity of the province. It was to get the deficit under control. It was to control the size and cost of government, and that cutting the size and cost of government and its agencies, that money would be returned to the Treasurer, to the province—that's what I assume you're telling the Toronto public school board—as their share of reducing the deficit.

But now you're saying that's not the reason in Hydro's case. You're only left with one rationale in Hydro's case. Your purpose was to take money away from public sector workers. As long as you accomplish that, you're happy.

My question to you is this: Is the purpose to reduce the deficit or is the purpose to punish public sector workers, and that as long as there's a plan, in the case of Hydro, to punish them, take 5% off their total wages, that's okay? Is that the purpose?

Hon Mr Laughren: First of all, at no point did we or anybody in this government say that there was going to be any effort or attempt to punish public sector workers. That's a ridiculous assumption the leader makes; that is downright silly. Why would we punish the very people who work in the public sector? The vast majority work extremely hard.

In terms of Ontario Hydro, Ontario Hydro is going through a very profound fundamental restructuring. The leader of the third party would understand that for the first time in living memory—and I've been here only 22 years—I can see real restraint being exercised in Ontario Hydro, something that his government didn't even encourage as it went on its nuclear spending spree during the 1970s and 1980s.

I would say to the leader of the third party that he's right in one sense: the purpose of the social contract was to lower the compensation bill of the Ontario government. To the extent that Ontario Hydro is going to pass on those savings to its ratepayers rather than to the consolidated revenue fund, he's correct. That does impact—I said that right at the beginning—on the social contract saving and is reduced from the \$2 billion that we set out as a target at the beginning of this process.

I think, though, to have said to Hydro, given particularly its latest numbers on how much it's losing this year, "Now, we demand the \$400 million back from you, on top of all the other problems you're going through," the leader of the third party would have been the first one on his feet to denounce us for being too hard on a utility that's going through a very difficult restructuring.

Mr Harris: There's absolutely nothing new today in

this area, in Hydro's area, that wasn't known this spring, that wasn't known last fall, that hasn't been known, that we haven't been telling you day after day after day since you took office. You keep changing and you keep moving the target. Now it's no longer \$2 billion for the integrity of the debt. You've already admitted \$200 million is gone already of that amount of money.

I want to talk as well about one of these sacred principles that was raised by the Liberal Party: the \$30,000. You have said that the \$30,000 is only in the bill. If you rely on the fail-safe provision of the bill, your \$30,000 is protected.

However, you have also acknowledged that the bill, if you're relying on it, is unworkable, because the choice then facing the employee is a cut from their wage, if they're under \$30,000, of 5%, or they can have zero. You've just acknowledged that; you said in your statement that the reason they can voluntarily take the 5% cut is so they don't lose their job.

You tell me, in the bill and in the amendment you refused to accept, do you think it's fair to say to those people under \$30,000, "Pick door A, 5% off your wages, or door B, everything off your wages; you've lost your job." Those are the two choices you have left for those under \$30,000 in many of the areas in your bill. Do you think that's a fair choice, "Pick this, nothing, or this, a 5% cut"?

Hon Mr Laughren: I think the leader of the third party is somewhat confused, but let me first deal with the beginning part of his question. In the beginning part of his question, he wasn't talking about the under-\$30,000; he was talking about Ontario Hydro in the beginning part of his final supplementary. He said that nothing has changed. Well, what has changed—and maybe the leader of the third party was elsewhere when this was being discussed in this chamber—is that Ontario Hydro's projected revenues have changed to the tune of \$200 million. He may not think that's important, but I think it's important and I think it was important to take that into consideration as we went about the social contract exercise. I think that's significant.

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On the \$30,000 low-income cutoff, I would simply say to the leader of the third party that under the legislation, Bill 48, the Social Contract Act, if that takes place and there's no agreement at the local level and the municipality must achieve its target and that municipality decides at some point in time to close down the department, then of course those people would lose their jobs, if that was the only way in which that municipality could reach its savings target. What this does is say to the employees, "If you wish, only if you wish, you can, rather than do that"—

Mr Harris: Rather than lose your job.

Hon Mr Laughren: Which they would lose anyway.

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Laughren: The leader of the third party seems to think that, even though he wants \$2 billion in savings, wants it desperately, he wants more—

Mr Harris: More.

Hon Mr Laughren: More, he says, more. He thinks that can be done without anybody in the province losing a job, that the municipalities can reduce their expenditures with nobody losing their job. The leader of the third party is falling over his own contradictions.

The Speaker: New question.

Mr Harris: I haven't said all these things. You're the ones who have said it. You said \$30,000 is sacred. You said \$2 billion or the province is down the tube. You said we had to do all these things.

The Speaker: Does the leader have a second question?

Mr Harris: I do, and it's to the Premier, because it's becoming increasingly clear that the reason for the social contract, the reason for the \$2 billion in wage cuts, is all over the map, and I would like to give the Premier an opportunity today to explain exactly why we are saying to employees, "We're going to reduce your standard of living by a minimum of 5%," why we're going to have to downsize the cost and size of government, why we need the \$2 billion. We heard lots of reasons earlier on: It was because of the deficit; we heard it was for the financial integrity of the province. I would like to give the Premier an opportunity today, in view of all that we've heard and all the different rationales we've heard, to explain to this House exactly why we are going through this turmoil and this exercise called social contract. Could you give us the why?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): If there's been a lot of different reasons offered and comments made, they haven't been made by members on this side or by the Minister of Finance or by any of us who have been trying to explain to people and going over the ground over many, many months why this kind of step is required.

It's required because Ontario has a significant deficit problem, and it's required because all our public sector institutions have to, in our view, make a contribution that will match the reality that's been under way for some time in the private sector, and that includes Ontario Hydro; it includes all of our public sector institutions. They will and they are making a contribution, as have people in the private sector made a very dramatic contribution because of what's taken place in the economy.

We decided as a province that we simply cannot afford to borrow in order to protect, if you will, the overall public sector from the reality of the extraordi-

nary downturn that took place starting in 1989. It would be irresponsible of the province to continue to borrow to do that, and that is why a reduction in the size of the public sector is required and that's why a reduction in the size of public sector compensation is required.

If we pass on the saving to ratepayers in Hydro or if it's reflected in terms of the changes that are effected, the efficiencies that are effected in municipalities, in our health care system and elsewhere, well, that's all to the good.

I don't expect there to be an outflowing of gratitude from among public sector workers when we are in fact asking them to take a reduction in order to help the province through an exceptionally difficult time. I don't expect them to be happy about that.

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his reply, please.

Hon Mr Rae: But I dearly wish the opposition would come clean and tell us consistently, what is their position? Where do they stand with respect to this issue? I hear far more understanding from the general public, much more appreciation from the general public, than I do from members opposite, who have nothing but criticism.

The Speaker: Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: If we negotiate, we're criticized. If we insist on legislation, we're criticized. All you want on this side is for the whole exercise to fail, and I can tell you—

The Speaker: Would the Premier please resume his seat. Supplementary?

Mr Harris: I merely ask the Premier, why? Why all this turmoil? We support the original principle, and we still do: Downsize the size and cost of government; get the deficit under control. We still support that. But surely, Premier, you can understand the confusion of one million public sector workers and their families. First of all, \$2 billion is sacrosanct; then we don't know. Then the slippage comes.

Now, Premier, according to a statement you made—not the opposition, not even the Liberals, who were the biggest spenders until you came along—July 7 at the McMichael gallery, the purpose of the social contract, in the speech you gave to the nurses—they had to cut back—was so you could fund the building of a new theatre. Members of the Ontario Nurses' Association who were present on July 7 tell us you said that a \$7-million IMAX movie theatre at the Ontario Science Centre was made possible by social contract savings.

Can you explain to the nurses, can you explain to the public sector workers, can you explain to one million public servants and their families the difference between what they are perfectly willing to do—you said you didn't expect any credit. They want to help. They want

their children to have an opportunity in this province. They want to see the deficit tackled. But their worst fears were confirmed when you told them the reason for it was so you could fund your pet NDP projects. Can you explain that to them, that that's the reason for the social contract talks?

Hon Mr Rae: The honourable member, if I may say so, is relying on thirdhand accounts of comments I made, that I have, again, made consistently in this House and that the Treasurer has made consistently in the budget. It's quite true. The Minister of Finance has stated it. I've stated clearly that we want to maintain the integrity of capital budgets. We want to maintain the ability of the province and the public sector and the private sector to invest. We've said that time and time again.

Yes, I think the first investment in 25 years made by a government in the Ontario Science Centre is a good idea. What would you do to the science centre, tear it down? It's going to attract new investments. It's going to attract new visitors. Those are good things to do. The fact of the matter is that some of the savings we are able to effect because of the reductions in public sector compensation are allowing the government and are allowing the public sector to make investments. We stand by those investments.

Over \$3.5 billion in Jobs Ontario capital, in capital formation in the public sector. What did you do in the early 1980s? You stopped the school-building. You stopped the house-building. You stopped the road-building. You cut back on capital investment. We're not going to do that. We're going to maintain capital investment. That has nothing to do with anybody's pet projects. That has to do with sound public policy, the creation of jobs in the face of what we've been through in the last few years. I'm proud of that.

The Speaker: Could the Premier conclude his reply, please.

Hon Mr Rae: I'm proud of the social contract and the fact that we're asking everyone to make a contribution at a time when we're going through such significant change.

Mr Harris: With all due respect, Premier, I say to you in this House, listening to your statements, listening to you today, listening to the original purpose, that you're losing it. You are becoming so irrational that nothing you say makes sense. You, quite frankly, are losing it.

By way of final supplementary, the Premier says I relied on unsubstantiated accounts of nurses who happened to be at the McMichael gallery when he gave the speech there. I wouldn't rely on that alone. I got many phone calls; so I phoned your office to confirm. They confirmed that, yes, that is indeed what you said. You have confirmed in this House that you want capital

spending, you want projects, you want to build this, you want to build that.

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The very, very worst fears of taxpayers, who are prepared to contribute to save this province, and the very, very worst fears of a million public servants and their families are coming true, that you do plan to take their \$2 billion, or \$1.8 billion—we've seen the slippage today—but when you get that money, you plan to fritter it all away on new government housing, new government day care, new capital projects—

The Speaker: Would the leader place a question, please.

Mr Harris: —and that you do not intend to use that money to solve the deficit problem, to save the province, to provide a future and hope and opportunity for their children, as was done for 42 years of Progressive Conservative government in this province. Their worst fears are being confirmed.

The Speaker: Does the leader have a question?

Mr Harris: I would ask you, Premier, to reflect on what you've said today and reassure us that every cent of the wages you're asking them to give up will in fact be used to solve the deficit problem, not to spend on your favourite NDP patronage, whatever it is, special projects.

Hon Mr Rae: History will determine which one of us, the leader of the third party or I, has either lost or regained or recaptured some, all or part of our marbles. But I would say to the honourable member with great respect, as they say in political life, that my understanding of the future includes child care, my understanding of the future includes roads, my understanding of the future includes housing, my understanding of the future includes science centres. It includes projects which have traditionally had the non-partisan support of all members of the House. There's nothing that's been said in these—

Mr Harnick: This sounds like Bob Rae telling the electorate to vote for him. I heard all that in the last election. Remember the Agenda for People?

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): My agenda includes people injured in automobile accidents being able to sue. Your Ontario included lots of things in the summer of 1990 it doesn't include now.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: I listen to what I hear opposite. I ask you, who's really losing it, Mr Speaker?

Interjections.

The Speaker: New question. The honourable member for St Catharines.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): There's a lot of noise in the House.

The Speaker: Order.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a question for the Premier. I heard the Premier make reference to history, and I would like to deal a bit with the history of the views of the Premier of Ontario on certain important issues. One of those issues is wasteful government spending.

I asked the Premier some time ago whether he was going to quit polling, spending his money on the polls. He's trying to get Mr Charlton back to palm this question off on him, but I don't think the Premier today will palm the question off on someone else.

In the context of a time of restraint and austerity and in view of the fact that the Premier in the past has been one of the strongest advocates of removing government advertising of a self-serving nature from the expenditure list of government—certainly he and I in opposition fought side by side on this issue—I ask the Premier how he can possibly justify full-page ads—and the information in them seems to be changing a bit—which are nothing more than NDP propaganda paid for by the taxpayers of the province of Ontario.

How can he possibly justify putting those kinds of ads in newspapers when, as the government, he already has the same access as everyone else to the news media?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): The ads may be a little on the dull side, but they certainly do reflect, I think, factually the situation. They're an effort to convey information to the public, and I think a government has a responsibility, as all people have a responsibility, to convey information to the public.

I would assume that your caucus conveys information with respect to your activities. Our government conveys information with respect to something which is a matter of public record and public policy. It would be irresponsible not to communicate with the public.

Mr Bradley: When the Premier and his government are out in the press conferences that they have access to, when they're issuing their press releases, when they're speaking in the Legislature, they have the opportunity to put their message out. But the Premier recognized, in his years gone by in this Legislature and the federal House of Commons, and he has certainly been critical of the federal government for this particular practice, that this is nothing more than the purveying of NDP propaganda.

We're not talking about a health ad which says the list of drugs that you are removing from seniors or an ad which might say that people who might have a problem with blood transfusions should report to certain centres. They're factual ads that everyone would agree with. We have here ads which are just government propaganda.

I ask the Premier, in conscience, and in the context of

the policy of restraint which he's enunciating, will he discontinue this particular practice and set a good example for the people in this province?

Hon Mr Rae: I find it interesting when we convey information. For example, I recall the questions that were raised during the budget. I'm proud of the fact that we did put out a four-page publication on the budget. The Liberal Party doesn't mind spending money issuing a 30-, 40-, 50-page briefing to the chartered accountants community or to the Canadian Bankers' Association or those people. No, no, that's fine, but if you try to present information in a way that's readable to the average person, to the average family in a form that's accessible, in a way in which it can be read, I think that's part of the responsibility of government.

Government has that responsibility, because I believe that information doesn't just belong to the bankers, doesn't just belong to the lawyers and doesn't just belong to all those people who have a vested interest in a situation. Information belongs to the public.

The public has a right to know and the public has a right to know what its government is doing and the public has a right to make their choices. We'll let the public make its choices rather than see it all tied up the way the Liberals used to do with all the vested interests. That's where you want it tied up.

WOMEN'S CENTRES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): In the absence of the Solicitor General, I'm going to refer this question to the Premier. He may want to refer it to someone else as well, I'm not sure, but it has to do with the wise and judicious use of taxpayers' dollars, a rather modest amount in terms of the total provincial budget but a significant one in terms of the fact that it's supposed to be directed towards victims of crime, specifically vulnerable women who are victims of sexual abuse.

We've heard recently of two investigations conducted by the Provincial Auditor into sexual assault centres in the province. We don't have access to those; they're secret reports, apparently. But we do have access to an independent review of the sexual assault centre in the Hamilton area, which is partially funded by the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

1500

I'm just going to deal with one aspect of this in my initial question. One element of this independent review talks about the centre's image as a radical lesbian organization where victims have reported that counsellors disclose their own sexual orientation, that victims are complaining about the fact that the counsellors have prepared a list of individuals they can speak to who are also put on this list because of their sexual orientation.

The final comment in this report indicates that there has been virtually no monitoring and evaluation by the

funder and no follow-up if performance of a centre in its various capacities is inadequate.

Premier, certainly the Solicitor General has had this report in his hands for some time now. How do you respond to these charges by victims of crime, victims of very serious sexual assaults and the way your money is being spent to supposedly assist these individuals?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): In the absence of the Solicitor General, I would refer it to the Attorney General and minister responsible for women's issues.

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Women's Issues): We too take the allegations very seriously, and I know the Solicitor General takes them very seriously. Not only the concerns that the auditor has expressed, but obviously any time a service that's funded by government gets that kind of criticism from those it is supposed to serve, it has to be a concern to all of us.

I understand from the Solicitor General that there are a whole series of new mechanisms that have been put into place in terms of monitoring the sexual assault centres. It is quite right to say that these centres were funded through a ministry that had not previously had the experience of dealing with community-based agencies to the extent that some of the other ministries have and that it has taken some time to set up procedures.

I understand from my colleague and from colleagues on the interministerial committee that oversees the sexual assault prevention program that these allegations are being taken very seriously and are being investigated and that the process by which services are delivered is being monitored very carefully.

Mr Runciman: This report was dated June 7. Now the minister says that the operations of various centres are being monitored very carefully, and this is dated less than five weeks ago.

She's not responsible for this particular portfolio, but she's standing up in the House today and saying they're being monitored very carefully. One has to question that and talk about the whole matter of victims in essence being revictimized. She's the minister responsible for women's issues, and this is a rather pat answer coming from her, I believe, and not responsible.

There's another element of this which I think is frightening and perhaps even horrific, and that deals with the complaints by clients of this centre in respect to the anti-police attitude on the part of counsellors. This has been reported by victims.

I'll just give the perspective of the police. They believe that the centre is deliberately persuading women not to report, that they tell women not to undergo the physical examination involved in the use of the rape kit because they will no longer be able to choose whether or not to report once this examination has been completed.

I've described this as a rather horrific, frightening document, and I'm asking the minister to get up, the minister responsible for women's issues, and condemn this sort of approach on the part of counsellors, people who are out there dealing with very vulnerable women in the province, people she's supposed to be advocating for in this House. Let's hear you condemn that sort of approach in sexual assault centres funded by your government.

Hon Mrs Boyd: For at least two days last week in this House we talked about the presumption of innocence when people made accusations against other people. These are allegations. They are being looked into. We take them very seriously, as we take any complaint of this issue, but we, unlike the member, do not make an assumption that those allegations can be borne out in fact. We make a presumption of innocence until that investigation is completed.

In answer to the preamble to the question, in which the member wondered how we could be monitoring, he knows very well how auditor's reports go. The auditor informed the Ministry of the Solicitor General some months ago that he had concerns, and the Minister of the Solicitor General at that time, the member for Oshawa, met with me, as Minister of Community and Social Services and minister responsible for women's issues, to set up a process whereby we could begin to ensure that the monitoring was complete.

I know for a fact that over the last few months there have been a number of changes put into place in terms of the administration and the management of those programs to deal not only with the financial issues but with the kind of program issues that have been raised by the member today.

I want to assure him that I will speak with the Solicitor General and he will be happy to let you know more detail about what that monitoring process is.

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATION

Mrs Irene Mathyssen (Middlesex): I too have a question for the minister responsible for women's issues.

The publication *Words That Count Women In*, was released by your office earlier this year. I found it a simple and easy-to-use guide to gender-inclusive language. It has a lot of ideas that make language clear, bias-free and removes distortion. It's been very popular in Middlesex. Can you tell me how this publication has been received by the general public?

Hon Marion Boyd (Minister Responsible for Women's Issues): Thank you to the member for the question. You're quite right. In general, it has been received very positively.

Of course, we produced the document in response to requests from the general public. There is a desire on the part of the public I think to be sure that language

that's used is inoffensive and that it is inclusive.

We have had a real influx of requests. In fact, our first run of the document was sold out. There were 20,000 copies printed and it was sold out.

We know it has generally been received very well by all sorts of community service groups, businesses, the media itself. We're very pleased that the general public takes this matter seriously because language is our way of expressing what we think of one another. So inclusiveness is very important.

Mrs Mathysen: I'm glad to hear that it has been positively received. I understand by the reaction opposite that they too have been busy reading this book. My problem is that I've run out of copies. I need more. When can I expect to have those available?

Hon Mrs Boyd: The member is not the only one who ran out of copies. The directors ran out of copies as well. We had to do another run. We had 24,000 copies on back order while we did this. We've made a few adjustments in the new edition of this because there was some feedback from the public that led us to believe we needed to adjust it.

Forty thousand copies have been ordered. I believe they've been received in the last couple of weeks. I would advise the member to order her copies early if she really wants to get them.

CLOSURE OF GOVERNMENT OFFICE

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): I have a question to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. That's you, Frances.

Back in June, the Premier complained loud and long about how Prime Minister Kim Campbell had left Ontario and Metro without any representation in an economic portfolio in her cabinet. He said it was unfair to ignore Canada's largest city and its economic heartland this way. I want to quote. He said, "This cabinet represents the most serious blow to Ontario, to our economic position in Confederation, since the origin of cabinet-making."

Now I find that the shoe is on the other foot. It seems that you will be shutting the Willowdale office of the Ontario Development Corp. This means that there will be no ODC office in Metro Toronto, an office that not only serves Metro but serves York and Durham regions as well. The closest office of this important economic agency to this city will be located in Peel.

Given your government's criticism of Kim Campbell's neglect of Metro Toronto, how can your government close down the only ODC office in the Metro Toronto area servicing Metro Toronto, the region of York and the region of Durham?

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I'm sorry, I didn't hear the beginning when the member was addressing the question to me just because of the general noise, but I heard

the full question. I appreciate the opportunity to answer it.

As part of our attempt in terms of setting up a budget with strong fiscal controls in it, we were doing a number of exercises within the ministry of streamlining operations. The Ontario Development Corp is one of them; so are our domestic offices in the trade division as well as, the member well knows, our international offices.

1510

With respect to the Ontario Development Corp, we have had the opportunity to take a look at the operations there and to determine that we can effectively serve people from a smaller number of offices in the Metro area. Of course we do have a head office down here in the Queen's Park area and the branch office in terms of the Willowdale office. Those facilities and services will be combined both back down to the head office and to the Peel area, as you have indicated.

I think one of the things that's really important to understand about the changes we are making is, yes, we are closing bricks and mortar operations and we will be saving money from that, but we will be maintaining the same level of service. I think in fact in the way we're reorganizing our ministry and the way we do business to bring about client account management we will be providing better service, both on our domestic side and on the ODC side.

I had the opportunity to recently meet with the new president of the ODC. I'm quite confident that she will do a tremendous job in ensuring that the streamlining is done in a way that will maintain a high level of services to the corporations and the industry in Ontario and in the Metro area.

Mr Kwinter: We are talking about consistency. On the one hand the government gripes about how Ottawa is ignoring Toronto and Ontario, but on the other hand this government is doing the same thing by closing down the ODC office in Willowdale. In fact, the person responsible for Metro Toronto will now be located in the London ODC office, about 200 kilometres away. The only group that is going to benefit from this move is the telephone company.

What the government's closing has done is to make it harder for Metro Toronto companies to access the assistance the ODC offers, such things as loan guarantees and the other services that come out of that. In the middle of Metro Toronto's already fragile recovery, does it serve the purpose of what this particular area needs to close the only office that is really servicing that group and also servicing the key areas of Durham and York region?

Hon Ms Lankin: Again, I have to say that I disagree with the premise of the member's question, that this action is discriminatory towards Metro Toronto. We

are streamlining our offices across the province, both ODC offices and our domestic offices, and we are working on this with other ministries. There are other ministries with regional offices where we can combine into the same office location and still continue to provide high level of services but at a lower cost to government.

I think that's smart in terms of a way of doing business, and I think we can take advantage of—the member makes a joke about the telephone, but with telecommunications, computers, travel, we can be places and meet with people and be out there in the field without having the bricks and mortar in an expensive rental location.

I would also say that in the work we have done with Metro Toronto through our Jobs Ontario training program, the community economic development initiative, the work we've been doing with respect to the development of the west downtown lands—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude her response, please?

Hon Ms Lankin: Yes, I will. Thank you, Mr Speaker—a major area of development in which we are putting together a leadership framework from the province, our commitment to Metro Toronto is one in which I stand proud of the record.

Interjection.

The Speaker: I understand the member for Parry Sound's concern, but the clock tells me that the time for oral questions has expired.

Petitions. The member for York Centre—York North.

PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE

Mr Charles Beer (York North): Thank you, Mr Speaker, but you're ahead of me, because it is my pleasure to stand today for the member for York Centre, Mr Sorbara, and present a petition from some 445 persons in his riding. The petition reads as follows:

"We, the residents of Ontario, disagree with the government's radical cuts in health care spending. We fear that the quality and access to health care will continue to deteriorate as a result of your proposed cuts."

I have signed that petition for myself and for Mr Sorbara.

NURSING HOMES

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I have a petition which reads as follows:

"As a resident of the Hamilton area, I have become aware of the application made to your ministry by the Christian Home Association of Mount Hamilton to develop and operate 150 nursing home beds in the city of Hamilton. I understand this home will be open to all on a non-sectarian and non-denominational basis. I

further understand that there have been no nursing home beds made available in Hamilton for some time and there are several hundred individuals in the Hamilton placement services list awaiting placement in existing nursing homes. Clearly these beds are very urgently needed in our community."

"The undersigned wholeheartedly supports the application by the Christian Home Association and highly recommends it to your consideration. I sincerely hope that you will be able to decide in favour of this application.

"As residents of the Hamilton area, we are acutely aware of the urgent need for additional nursing home beds in our community. We believe the Christian Home Association proposal has merit and accordingly recommend it most highly for your kind consideration."

There are hundreds of signatures on these. I know the government House leader will be particularly interested in this petition and I'm very happy to support it.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): I have a petition here that has about 800 signatures from people from Wallaceburg, Chatham, Dover and Dresden, dealing with the Sunday shopping bill, Bill 38. It says:

"We, the undersigned, hereby register our opposition to wide-open Sunday business.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of our society in Ontario and cause increasing hardship on retailers, retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendments under the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I hereby affix my signature in support.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, demand that the government honour the existing contract with the Ontario Medical Association. The government should look to the medical experts for cost-cutting measures in medicare."

The petition is signed by several hundreds of residents of Burlington, Oakville, Stoney Creek and Hamilton and I affix my name to this petition.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

This petition is signed by about 1,000 residents concerned about health care in North Bay.

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I have, again, hundreds of signatures from the city of Windsor and other places against casino gambling. They say:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted with the citizens of this province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I'm very glad to affix my signature to this very important petition.

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GO BUS SERVICE

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows: to object to the proposed cuts to the GO Transit bus service to Markham, Stouffville and Uxbridge.

"Whereas this will be a major inconvenience to non-drivers and will substantially increase time for travellers and all users;

"Whereas the lack of transit services will increase traffic, thereby increasing air pollution levels at all times, and all levels of government are making efforts to reduce pollution and to encourage public transportation systems;

"Whereas the cuts leave no alternative means of commuting in and out of Toronto for individuals working with flexible work arrangements and child care commitments (the earliest train departs from downtown at 5:20)"—and there is no train that goes to Uxbridge.

"Whereas it will have a negative impact on the local economy;

"Whereas the lack of GO buses will force passengers to incur expenses, finding and using alternative forms of transportation;

"That the government of Ontario overturn GO Transit's decision and continue the GO bus transit service to Markham, Stouffville and Uxbridge."

I met with the council yesterday in Uxbridge and tomorrow night I'll meet with the residents in Uxbridge about this very important issue. I have signed my name to this petition.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): I remind all members that interjections are out of order and that the honourable members have the floor very legitimately.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Robert Chiarelli (Ottawa West): I have a petition signed by over 250 people from my riding of Ottawa West and surrounding ridings.

"To the honourable Lieutenant Governor and to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, hereby register our opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"We believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I've signed the petition.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: I remind members that shouting across the floor will accomplish nothing.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I have a petition from the North Bay Golden Age Club. The North Bay

Golden Age Club petitions the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"We object strenuously to the province's proposed user fees on select drugs."

It's signed by several hundred members of the North Bay Golden Age Club.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): I have here hundreds of signatures where it says:

"We, the undersigned, hereby register our opposition to wide-open Sunday business.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on retailers, retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

Under the standing orders, I affix my signature.

Mr Frank Mclash (Kenora): I have a petition that reads:

"To the members of provincial Parliament:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to the proposed amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for quality of life, religious freedom and family time. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardships on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I present that petition to you.

GO BUS SERVICE

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To object to the proposed cuts to GO Transit bus services to Markham, Stouffville and Uxbridge.

"Whereas this will be a major inconvenience to non-drivers and will substantially increase the travelling time for all users;

"Whereas the lack of transit services will increase traffic, thereby increasing air pollution levels at a time when all levels of government are making efforts to reduce pollution and encourage public transport systems;

"Whereas the cuts leave no alternative means of

commuting in and out of Toronto for individuals with flexible work arrangements and child care commitments, with the earliest train departing from downtown at 5:20 pm;

"Whereas it will have a negative impact on the local economy;

"Whereas the lack of GO buses will force passengers to incur extra expenses in finding and using alternate forms of transportation;

"That the government of Ontario overturn GO Transit's decision and continue the GO transit bus services to Markham, Stouffville and Uxbridge."

I submit this petition with my name affixed to it, with the hopes the government will do something.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): I have a petition which I'm presenting on behalf of my colleague the member for High Park-Swansea. As you know, as Minister of Citizenship, she cannot present petitions in the House.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

CLOSURE OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food has decided to close Centralia College of Agricultural Technology and the veterinary services laboratory diagnostic laboratory at the college as of May 1, 1994,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To reverse the decision to close the Centralia College of Agricultural Technology and the veterinary services laboratory located on Centralia's campus."

I have attached my signature.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I've got a whole whack of petitions here. Some are phrased in different ways, but they all deal with Bill 38, Sunday shopping. Rather than take up the time of the Legislature in reading the full text of them, suffice it to say that there are about 1,000 people in North Bay who are opposed to Bill 38 because they believe it leads to wide-open Sunday business and shopping in the province of Ontario, and they would like that expressed to the Legislature.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition

here that was forwarded to me by a local psychiatrist by the name of Pramit Tahlan. It's a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and they want the government to withdraw proposed measures and recommit to the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement.

GAMBLING

Mr John Sola (Mississauga East): I have a petition here which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

HEALTH CARE

Mr Charles Beer (York North): Again, on behalf of my colleague from York Centre, I have the pleasure to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario signed by several hundred representatives from York Centre:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

I have affixed my signature thereto.

1530

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

VIOLENT CRIME CARDS ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LES CARTES
ILLUSTRANT DES CRIMES VIOLENTS

On motion by Ms Poole, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 76, An Act to restrict the trade of Violent Crime Cards / Loi visant à restreindre le commerce de cartes de crimes violents.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The honourable member for Eglinton has some opening remarks.

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): In view of my difficulties in speaking today, I wonder if I could have unanimous consent for the member for York North to make a few comments on my remarks.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent? The honourable member for Eglinton does have a problem with her voice. Agreed.

Mr Charles Beer (York North): I'm pleased to be able to assist my colleague today. Ms Poole has brought forward this bill because she is extremely concerned that serial killer trading cards imported from California are now available for sale in Ontario. These cards depict colour sketches of convicted serial killers, mass murderers and organized crime figures.

Ms Poole is very concerned that these cards are sending the wrong message to our children. Trading cards have traditionally been used to glorify sports heroes. Are we telling our children that their new heroes are serial killers?

Our children must be protected. It is her hope that the government will take up her private member's bill, which would restrict the trade of these serial killer cards to young people under the age of 18, and make it government legislation.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The honourable government House leader.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): The fourth order.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): The fourth order, third reading of Bill 103, An Act to provide firefighters with protection from personal liability and indemnification for legal costs, Mr Christopherson.

Hon Mr Charlton: I move that the order for third reading of Bill 103, An Act to provide firefighters with protection from personal liability and indemnification for legal costs, be discharged and the bill be referred to committee of the whole House.

This is simply a motion to get the bill back into committee of the whole so we can move a couple of

amendments that correct some errors or discrepancies in the French version of the bill so we can then pass it this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

Hon Mr Charlton: The ninth order, committee of the whole House.

The Acting Speaker: I do now leave the Speaker's chair and go into committee of the whole House.

House in committee of the whole.

EDUCATION STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE L'ÉDUCATION

Consideration of Bill 4, An Act to amend certain Acts relating to Education / Loi modifiant certaines lois en ce qui concerne l'éducation.

The Second Deputy Chair (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Questions or comments or amendments to Bill 4 as it now stands? We are dealing with Bill 4, as was ordered by the government House leader. Last call for amendments or changes to the bill as it now stands.

Seeing none, shall sections 1 through 60 of Bill 4 stand as part of that bill? Agreed.

Shall the title carry? Agreed.

Shall I report the bill to the House? Agreed.

FIREFIGHTERS PROTECTION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'IMMUNITÉ DES POMPIERS

Consideration of Bill 103, An Act to provide firefighters with protection from personal liability and indemnification for legal costs / Loi visant à accorder l'immunité aux pompiers et à les indemniser de leurs frais de justice.

The Second Deputy Chair (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the member for Durham East, as parliamentary assistant, have some opening remarks?

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): My colleague the member for Sudbury is going to move the amendments.

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): I have two motions to introduce today to correct the French-language version of Bill 103, the Firefighters Protection Act. These motions will ensure that the French- and English-language versions of the legislation are entirely consistent with each other.

I move that the French version of section 1 of the bill be amended by striking out the definitions «équipe de protection contre les incendies» and «pompier» and substituting the following:

«équipe de protection contre les incendies» Équipe de protection contre les incendies mise sur pied en vertu de la Loi sur les commissaires des incendies pour assurer des services de prévention des incendies et de protection contre les incendies dans les territoires non érigés en municipalité. («fire protection team»)

«pompier» Employé à plein temps ou à temps partiel d'un service des pompiers, membre volontaire d'un service des pompiers (qu'il reçoive ou non une rétribution modique pour ses services) ou membre d'une équipe de protection contre les incendies. («firefighter»)

The Second Deputy Chair: We will deal with the first amendment. Ms Murdock has moved an amendment to section 1—dispense? Agreed.

Debate on Ms Murdock's amendment: Does Ms Murdock have some further explanation? Debate?

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I realize that these are technical amendments and that we're going to proceed today with third reading, I believe, with the consent of the House. Once again, I know the critics from both the Liberal Party and the Progressive Conservative Party rose to correct the record of the parliamentary assistant, the member for Durham East, who very erroneously reported to the House in his comments on this legislation alluding that the opposition parties were not entirely enthusiastic or supportive of this legislation.

I also recognize that the parliamentary assistant, after he was straightened out by members of his own caucus, I believe, made some comments to correct the record.

Let me say how much I regret that that partisan cheap-shot attitude exists within the member for Durham East in the first place on a piece of legislation that is the rarity around here, where the minister and the critics from both opposition parties worked so positively and cooperatively together. Any slight when we finally do—we've talked about new rules. We've talked about new ways of coming together, of government and opposition working together. The public is crying out and demanding that we begin to change the way we operate in the Legislature and in our legislatures across the country and in the House of Commons as well.

I just wanted to congratulate the critics. It's very difficult in opposition when that attitude exists within the government and obviously is on the top of the mind of the parliamentary assistant, the member for Durham East; in fact, one of the attitudes that is preventing this Legislature from assisting and facilitating this type of legislation and other types of legislation.

Let me also say congratulations to the firefighters and the association for the effective job they did in making sure that all members on all sides of the House understood the purpose and the intention of the legislation and the importance of it, and how pleased we have been, as an opposition party and as a caucus, to facilitate that.

1540

The Second Deputy Chair: Further comments to Ms Murdock's amendments?

Is it the pleasure of the House that Ms Murdock's amendment to section 1 carry? Carried.

Shall section 1, as amended, carry? Agreed.

We have further amendments.

Ms Murdock: Subsection 2(2): I move that the French version of subsection 2(2) of the bill be amended by striking out «La Couronne et les municipalités sont responsables d'un tel délit comme si le paragraphe (1) n'avait pas été adopté» in the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th lines.

The Second Deputy Chair: Ms Murdock has moved—dispense? Agreed.

Comments on the amendment? Further comments on the amendment?

Shall the amendment, as suggested by Ms Murdock, to subsection 2(2) carry? Agreed.

Shall section 2, as amended, carry? Agreed.

Shall sections 3 through 5 of Bill 103 carry as presented? Agreed.

Shall the title carry? Agreed.

Shall the bill, as amended, be reported to the House? Agreed.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I move that the committee rise and report.

The Second Deputy Chair: Mr Charlton moves that the committee rise and report. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

I do now leave the committee of the whole to resume the Speaker's chair.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The committee of the whole House begs to report one bill without amendment and one bill with amendments and asks for leave to sit again.

Shall the reports be received and adopted? Agreed.

FIREFIGHTERS PROTECTION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'IMMUNITÉ DES POMPIERS

Mr Mills, on behalf of Mr Christopherson, moves third reading of Bill 103, An Act to provide firefighters with protection from personal liability and indemnification for legal costs / Loi visant à accorder l'immunité aux pompiers et à leur indemniser de leurs frais de justice.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Opening comments, parliamentary assistant.

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I'm going to be very brief, and I feel somewhat obligated to respond to the leader—

Interjection.

Mr Mills: No, I'm not going to say anything. Okay.

This bill is very important to firefighters across Ontario, and I want to take a brief moment to introduce some of the fire chiefs from Ontario who are here in the members' gallery this afternoon to be a party and a witness to this third reading of very important legislation.

I'd like to recognize Chief Ramsay from Etobicoke;

Deputy Chief Colhoun, from Etobicoke too; Chief Anderson from my colleague's riding of Chatham; Chief Beckett from Markham; the fire chief from Scarborough, Tom Powell; the fire chief from East York, John Miller; and the fire chief from Port Colborne, Douglas Lockyer.

Finally, I'd just like to thank my colleague the member for Sudbury, who ably provided the French translations I was unable to do at this moment.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I just want to place on the record once more the fact that the PC caucus is very supportive of Bill 103. We are indeed happy that we are at third reading of this bill, An Act to provide firefighters with protection from personal liability and indemnification for legal costs. It goes without saying that obviously this bill has been a long time coming and probably should have been passed many, many years ago.

It's hard to realize that this kind of legislation was even required. It should have been a foregone conclusion that firefighters would have been protected at all times from personal liability or the risk of legal costs.

How ironic that those people in our public service, not only in this province but across this nation, who, as I referred to yesterday, take tremendous personal risks to protect us, the public, and at all times there's never any hesitancy on the part of firefighters in this province to execute their duties, which often involve tremendous bravery. We are all truly indebted to those people who are willing to serve as firefighters in Ontario, and I too welcome the fire chiefs who are here today and know many of the others who are not here who would have liked to have been here to witness this third reading. We are most happy about it in the Progressive Conservative caucus.

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I too want to place on the record our party's definite support of this bill. We too believe that the firefighters across Ontario give so much to the safety and also personally of their own time and energies for so many. I want to say that certainly I was extremely happy when I had all-party support for my bill, Bill 87, and now again we are showing our support for this particular bill, which will provide peace of mind, I think, more so, for the firefighters. I'm happy to have been able to meet with some of the chiefs, and I just wanted to definitely say that our party supports this 100%.

Mr Robert Chiarelli (Ottawa West): Just very briefly, Mr Speaker, on behalf of our caucus I certainly want to share in welcoming the firefighters to the gallery here today, and without going into a lot of detail certainly refer to the comments that we made yesterday, which are recorded in Hansard, on second reading.

The firefighters in the execution of their responsibilities face tremendous pressures and risks in the per-

formance of their jobs, and the last thing that they should have to worry about, is the risk of civil suits and being dragged into the courts in the performance of their responsibilities in good faith.

We're certainly pleased to support this legislation and we're certainly pleased to have seen all three parties get together and support this and get it through as quickly as possible.

The Acting Speaker: Questions or comments? Further debate? It appears that there is no further debate. Would the parliamentary assistant have some closing remarks?

Mr Mills: I think enough has been said, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Mills has moved third reading of Bill 103. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

1550

TORONTO ISLANDS RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY
STEWARDSHIP ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'ADMINISTRATION
DE LA ZONE RÉSIDENTIELLE
DES ÎLES DE TORONTO

Mr Philip moved third reading of Bill 61, An Act respecting Algonquin and Ward's Islands and respecting the Stewardship of the Residential Community on the Toronto Islands / Loi concernant les îles Algonquin et Ward's et concernant l'administration de la zone résidentielle des îles de Toronto.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the Minister of Municipal Affairs have some opening remarks?

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): It certainly gives me a great deal of pleasure as the minister responsible for the greater Toronto area and the Minister of Municipal Affairs to present this bill for third reading.

First of all, let me say that I think a great deal of congratulations go to the islanders, who for many years have been frustrated by a very awkward situation that they lived under but who kept on appearing before government after government and presenting their concerns and acted in so reasonable a manner.

Secondly, a lot of credit has to go, I think, to my predecessor, the member for Windsor-Riverside, Mr David Cooke. He has certainly impressed me that, as a minister, he is not afraid to tackle complicated issues and to deal with issues that are often controversial. That stamina and that sense of responsibility, I think, are shown in the work that he did on this bill.

Gordon Mills, who is the member for Durham East, presided over the hearings and I think became quite loved by the residents of the community, as well as respected by them, for the work that he did in piloting

and in steering that committee and in dealing with many of the issues that arose in those hearings. I know that he's planning on attending the celebration, as I am, on August 1, and as a singer of some renown he will no doubt entertain all of us with The Good Ship Lollipop and other appropriate songs.

An awful lot of credit goes, of course, to Richard Johnston, my former colleague, and I'll say a few words about that in a minute.

I think the other person who deserves to be recognized in this long battle, of course, is the MPP for Fort York, Rosario Marchese. Rosario initially was able to impress our cabinet that this issue, among so many important issues, deserved priority for this government. He worked closely at every step of the way on the legislation. He was in constant communication with the island community, with my ministry, with the various stakeholders to ensure that a successful solution would come to the many problems we faced. Today, I think it's important that we recognize him for his important contribution.

Last, but not least, I've had to be impressed by the quality of the staff that I have, both in the ministry of the greater Toronto area and in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs since I became minister. They've acted in a professional way, they've acted in a flexible way, they've acted in a creative way, and both the political side of my ministry and the ministry side have won, I know, not only my respect but the respect of every citizen whom they are dealing with, including those who are closest to this bill.

I'll just take a few moments, because of the time limits, to deal in a very short way with this bill. The legislation will, first of all, finally resolve the long-standing dispute over the residential community on the Toronto Islands. It does so in a way that I believe is fair to the islanders, fair to the city, fair to Metropolitan Toronto and, most of all, fair to the people of Ontario.

I would like to sketch just briefly the history of this unique Ontario community. The Toronto Islands community is as old as this country. It began as a cottage development in 1867, the year of Confederation. Twenty-one years later, the city of Toronto established a 200-acre park there.

The attempted dismantling of this close and independent community began in 1956 when Metro Toronto first took over the island. Four hundred homes were demolished in 1957. In 1968, the first homes were demolished without any compensation whatsoever. Since 1974, when Metro terminated the islands' leases, members of the community have led a precarious existence, uncertain about their future. The legislation before you for third reading will give that community a sense of security that it needs to plan for its future.

The Toronto Islands are the home of 650 people who

occupy some 250 homes on 33 acres of land. Despite various comments to the contrary, that's less than 5% of the total land on the islands. According to a 1991 survey of island residents, 65% have lived on the island for 15 years or more. Fifty-four of the 250 houses are owned by retirees, and more than 22% of the residents have a household income of less than \$20,000.

Clearly, this is a community worthy of consideration and of preservation, not only for the benefit of those who live there but for the thousands of people who love to visit it yearly.

On March 13, 1991, my former colleague Richard Johnston was appointed by the Minister of Municipal Affairs as special adviser to the Toronto Islands. He was given 60 days in which to report on the fairest way to ensure preservation of the residential community on the Toronto Islands. Mr Johnston's dedication, his vision, his perseverance, indeed, deserve to be acknowledged, and we should applaud a colleague whom I hold dearly and respect so much.

Mr Speaker, the legislation before you is based on Richard Johnston's recommendations and is the result of extensive consultation and negotiations among the province, Metro Toronto, the city of Toronto and the islanders themselves, all of whom made accommodations and compromises from their original positions. This bill represents the best, the most comprehensive solution to a very long-outstanding thorny issue.

Members will recall that this bill was introduced in June 1992 and received second reading in November 1992.

The legislation includes these measures:

Land comprising the residential community will remain in public ownership, being transferred from Metro Toronto to the province.

A Toronto Islands community trust will be established to manage the lands. The province will lease the land to this trust for 99 years.

Homes will be returned to the island residents.

Island residents will be offered 99-year leases for the land.

The city of Toronto will receive about \$12 million through the sale of land leases to the island residents. In addition, the city will be able to collect a portion of its prior water and sewer infrastructure investment.

Property sales will be strictly regulated to ensure that no windfall profits accrue to anyone.

The islands community will be increased by up to 110 new housing units, most of them managed by a housing cooperative.

Finally, Ward's Island will continue to be a welcoming gateway to the island park.

Several changes have been made in the original bill. These are provisions that will protect individuals who

occupy a home on the island but who are not entitled to ownership on it.

I believe the changes we have made and the original components of the bill provide a creative, a fair and an equitable response to the debate over the future of the Toronto Islands. I congratulate everyone who was involved. I'm proud to be the minister who has moved third reading of this bill.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Very briefly, this bill will go through, obviously, today, and I just wanted to point out that although the member and minister, in his capacity as Minister of Municipal Affairs, pointed out some of the good parts to this, there was some controversy and continues to be some controversy about the settlement that was made.

I think it's fair to say that when we were here on November 17 and 18 when this bill was discussed on second reading there were very lengthy and interesting speeches, some with some of the most dramatic choreography I have ever witnessed in this place attached to the words.

But there are some very strong feelings about this legislation. I don't think it would be fair to let anyone who is watching the proceedings today go without heeding the fact that there are several questions, and perhaps if they wanted to take a look at Hansard of November 17 and November 18, 1992, around pages 3292 and following, they would probably be able to come to grips with some of the difficulties that some people have observed about the settlement.

1600

There isn't any question in my mind that if there is anything that has to be done and be seen to be done, it is that it has to be fair and has to be seen to be fair. But quite honestly, as we go through social contract, with the elimination of certain obvious incomes for some people under the social contract and the cutbacks that are going on with respect to services, the type of agreement here seen under Bill 61 is going to be noted very much as special status activities being carried on.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): But, Murray, be up front about it.

Mr Elston: I just can't bear having the member for Yorkview, I think it is, yipping again about this. All I'm saying is that there has to be fairness seen to be done, and there are so many people when they have looked at this who don't think it is fair that I think the minister should acknowledge that this is problematic with this particular public policy piece.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I guess the most appropriate thing that the Minister of Municipal Affairs has just said about Bill 61, the bill that gives public property to some very special people on the Toronto Islands, was that he referred to somebody singing The Good Ship Lollipop. I want to tell

you that that's a very apt description of this bill. This bill is The Good Ship Lollipop for those people who are going to benefit from it.

I listened very carefully to the minister's chronology and history of the island homes, and if the people who originally lived in those homes were still there today, I would be standing here saying something entirely different. But the reason that we so strongly oppose this legislation is that it is purely an élitist piece of legislation to people who happen to have made a decision to support the New Democratic Party. It is very élitist when you look at the list of the people who live there. I want to tell you that, in referring to something that my colleague the member for Etobicoke West has said about this bill in the past, frankly I think this could only happen in socialist Ontario.

If we were looking to protect people who couldn't afford to live anywhere else, I would say, "Yes, a dollar a day for 99 years is okay," but we're looking at a dollar a day for 99 years—

The Acting Speaker: Time has expired. Further questions or comments? The honourable member for Ottawa East.

Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East): It's not only a lollipop deal; I called it at second reading a sweetheart deal, because I know that a lot of people, a lot of families, a lot of seniors in this province are on a housing waiting list and would like to get this kind of sweetheart deal.

But with the presence of the minister in the House, I do have a few questions of the minister concerning Bill 61. Under this legislation, a commissioner is supposed to be appointed to review ownership. My questions are very simple: Has the commissioner been appointed? Has the review started? Those are two of my questions.

I'd also like to point out to the minister that part of the islands concerned—there's a floodplain area that restricts the construction of any type of buildings. I've heard the minister referring to the addition of 110 residential units to be built on the island and it's right in the floodplain. So my third question to the minister: Has this been resolved? Will the 110 units be built in the floodplain? You pull the plug on a major development because of the floodplain area and I'm asking you today, will you still go ahead with your 110 units to be built on those islands?

The Acting Speaker: We can accommodate one final participant. Seeing none, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and responsible for the greater Toronto area.

Hon Mr Philip: I'll just take one minute to respond. First of all, this is a fair settlement. It's a problem that has been outstanding under both the Liberals and the Conservatives. We've dealt with it in a reasonable and responsible manner.

I respect the fact that the member for Vanier, who

was the mayor of Vanier and who represents working-class people, can understand that and that he's been reasonable in his comments in committee. Therefore, it comes as somewhat of a surprise to me that he and his party would find so much fault with this bill.

With regard to the comments from the member for Mississauga South and indeed all of the members of the Conservative Party, many of whom have been a lot more outlandish in their comments than the member for Mississauga South—their problem is, of course, that they don't believe ordinary people should be able to live in an outstanding and extraordinary location. That's their problem.

If you look at who lives on the island, we have in the gallery a woman who lived in a concentration camp. It's hardly somebody, then, who is an élitist. She put herself through an extraordinary set of circumstances and lived through it.

Mrs Marland: Engineers, architects, psychologists, university professors. There are about 10 people who are original residents; everybody else is a professional and these professionals can afford to live somewhere else.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please.

Hon Mr Philip: Mr Speaker, 20.5% of the island householders are low-income householders as compared to 13% in Metro Toronto and as compared to the people who live in the riding of the member for Mississauga South. She should be ashamed of herself that she doesn't want ordinary people to live in an extraordinary location.

Mrs Marland: If they were single moms or people who needed help it would be different, but you are giving 99 years to university professors, architects, businessmen, lawyers, teachers, consultants, therapists. How interesting. It is unfortunate that you don't know who is living there.

Hon Mr Philip: She doesn't want me to tell the truth because she's been out there with her party spreading mistruths, spreading all kinds of gossip about these ordinary people and using words like "élitist" to describe them. That simply is unfair; it's politically deceitful and she should be ashamed of herself.

I'm proud of this bill and I'm proud of what—

The Acting Speaker: The time for responses is complete.

Mrs Marland: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would ask the minister to withdraw his comments suggesting that I am deceitful. I understand that's unparliamentary language.

Hon Mr Philip: I withdraw any remarks that may have offended the member.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Further debate? The member for Mississauga South.

Mrs Marland: I do not plan to spend very much time on this bill because this bill is going to pass regardless of the public opinion. But I think when the minister stands up and talks about the poor people who live in these homes on the island, he would do well to have his staff give him a list of who these people are who own these homes currently on the island—or who, pardon me, don't own them, but who reside there.

Fortunately, we do have a list. I'm not going to refer to anybody by name, but I think it's very important, first of all, to know that we're talking about \$1 a day for 99 years. We're talking about \$30 a month for these 99-year, lifelong leases.

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We're not talking about people who need affordable housing exactly; we're talking in some cases about civil servants who work in this province and I would suggest that civil servants who work in this province, for the most part, have their income guaranteed by taxpayers.

We're talking about doctors. Goodness knows, perhaps by the time this government is finished its treatment of the professions in this province, people like doctors may need to be given accommodation at \$1 a day for 99 years, but right now the doctors in this province certainly don't need that kind of subsidy in terms of their living accommodation.

We're talking about lawyers. We're also talking about psychologists, several businessmen, engineers, architects, teachers, consultants, therapists, university professors. I wish somebody could tell me who in that category needs this kind of sweetheart deal.

Most importantly, of course, what we're dealing with here is a pure sellout for the sake of having one NDP member guaranteed a seat in this Legislature. I have no difficulty with who the current member is. I'm simply saying that we're dealing with a political buyout here.

And it is élitist. You only have to go over to those islands to recognize that this lease is only the beginning of the cost for the taxpayers in this province, and indeed in Toronto and Metro. What about all the services that go to support those homes and those residents being there? If they're people who are in these professions, we are not talking about the working poor, so I can't sit in this House and say, "You don't know who you're talking about and you should be ashamed." I'm not ashamed.

What I'm ashamed about for this government is the fact that it's not dealing with the original home owners, because the original home owners are long gone from these houses on the island, with the exception of about three or four families. What we're dealing with is people being given a 99-year lease that they can pass on through their families, regardless of the income and the ability to provide their own housing of their children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren and great-

great-grandchildren, for \$1 a day. What kind of a subsidy is this?

If they are bound and intent to keep this preserve, this élitist preserve, then why aren't they looking at it for housing for the people who really need it, not people who are in a position to provide their own housing?

We're talking about city councillors. It's the same thing as the fact that we have government members in this House who live in co-ops that are subsidized by the taxpayers of this province.

How is it that on the one hand this government says, "We need millions of dollars to build government housing for the people who can't afford it," and in the same party we have members who earn in excess of \$80,000 a year who live in subsidized co-ops? And if somebody starts the argument that co-ops aren't subsidized by the taxpayers in this province, then it really just shows that they don't know what they're talking about.

This bill is atrocious. That land should be saved for all of the people in this province, and particularly as an escape for all of the people who live in the downtown, densely urban core of the greater Toronto area. I think this idea of giving these leases to these people, regardless of their future—I mean, even if they wanted to argue that the people in those houses today had some need, then let them take a needs test. Let them have a means test to establish whether or not they should have accommodation given to them for \$1 a day, and then everybody else who comes along must go through that same means test and find whether they are truly eligible for this sweetheart deal at the expense of the taxpayers.

If you were truly being altruistic about this, Minister, you would be saying, "Yes, we will keep this housing for those people who need it, because these people can't afford any other kind of housing." You would not be passing a bill that gives 99-year leases at \$1 a day. It is totally unjust in the overall interests of people who do need affordable housing in this province, and you can't argue it both ways.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments? Further debate? Would the minister have some wrapup remarks?

Mr Grandmaître: Mr Speaker, I'm sorry—

The Acting Speaker: The member for Ottawa West, further debate.

Mr Grandmaître: Ottawa East.

The Acting Speaker: Ottawa East; I'm sorry.

Mr Grandmaître: I came from the west.

Mr Minister, I've asked you three questions and you haven't answered my questions. Have you appointed a commissioner? Is the residency resolved? Also, what about the floodplain? Is Metro at the present time working or is the province working on the floodplain

area to make sure that the 110 units you're proposing to build will be built in a safe area? I've asked you three questions.

Hon Mr Philip: The answer is yes, yes, yes. I'll be happy to supply the data to the member in writing.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Philip has moved third reading of Bill 61.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

EDUCATION STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE L'ÉDUCATION

Mr Cooke moved third reading of Bill 4, An Act to amend certain Acts relating to Education / Loi modifiant certaines lois en ce qui concerne l'éducation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Mr Cooke, some opening remarks.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I have some comments that I want to get on the record in response to concerns that have been expressed by the opposition critics, by members of the committee and others. I'm going to plow through these comments. There's already been considerable discussion of this bill at second reading and in the standing committee on social development, so I will try to be relatively short.

Before I do get into the actual comments, I would like to pay tribute to my parliamentary assistants who have played a positive role in the progress of this bill. The member for York East, Mr Malkowski, led the debate in second reading and Tony Martin, the member for Sault Ste Marie, played a key role in getting this bill dealt with in the standing committee. I certainly want to thank them for their assistance and their leadership on this bill.

I'd also like to thank the other members of the standing committee, and in particular the critics from the two opposition parties for their informed and constructive contribution to the consideration of this bill: the member for London North, Dianne Cunningham, and the member for York North, Charles Beer. Both made a number of positive suggestions and amendments. I very much appreciate their cooperation and participation. In fact, I think the process that's been used on this bill, and some of the issues that were identified, has been a very good one. We've tried to work together to find some solutions to issues that were appropriately identified.

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There were a number of amendments to the bill made in standing committee which I believe were supported by all members of the committee. I would like to highlight some of them very briefly.

As you know, this bill contains provisions for setting a maximum period of 20 days for the suspension of a student. Where a student is suspended for the maximum period or more than once during the school year, an amendment to the bill will now require the school boards to review the suspension and, where appropriate, advise the pupil and the parents of services available in the community to assist the pupil. I hope that this amendment will assist in ensuring that the root causes of a pupil's behaviour are dealt with so that the pupil can participate fully in the school program.

In response to a suggestion from the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, the committee also amended the bill to extend the grounds for which a pupil may be expelled. The amended section provides that a pupil may be expelled where the pupil's presence is injurious to teachers or other staff as well as to students. I believe that this amendment reflects a commitment we all share to ensure that our schools are safe for all who study and work in them.

I'd also like to mention that we introduced an amendment to the bill which will ensure that children of persons illegally resident in Ontario are able to attend schools in their local boards on the same basis as other pupils. This amendment incorporates the substance of Bill 24, introduced by the member for Oriole, Mrs Caplan. That member had talked to us before the bill went into committee and I'm quite pleased that we were able to incorporate her suggestion and her bill in this legislation as well.

I'd like to turn now to the final and very important part of the remarks today with regard to Bill 4. The passage of Bill 4 will repeal the portion of the Education Act which deals with the so-called hard-to-serve students. I want to emphasize that our reason for proposing this amendment to the Education Act is to ensure that all students in the province, including every exceptional student, is able to receive an appropriate educational placement in the publicly supported school system. We believe that this is an objective which should and can be achieved in Ontario.

I note that there are approximately 165,000 exceptional students presently enrolled in the school board programs across the province. Included in that number are over 78,000 learning-disabled students who are receiving education in their local school boards. The school boards across our province ensure that the overwhelming majority of our exceptional students are provided with excellent education placements by caring professionals in their local communities. The provincial and demonstration schools supplement these opportun-

ities with excellent programming for students with particular needs. However, I am well aware of the sincere and important concerns that have been expressed about the repeal of the hard-to-serve provisions of the act.

We have heard from several organizations and parents about their fear that a small number of students may be allowed to fall through the cracks if their local school boards are not able to provide an appropriate placement for them or are not willing to purchase from one of the other school boards.

I've been especially troubled by reports that students with severe learning disabilities or with learning disabilities in combination with behavioural and attention-deficit disorders have not been adequately served by existing publicly supported programs. Parents have told us of the difficulty they have experienced in working with school boards which they feel have not provided adequate programs and which they also feel have not been entirely cooperative in working with parents to find better options.

In response to these concerns and to ensure that pupils have a safety net available to them, my ministry has made a commitment to do the following:

Bill 4 will permit the minister to pay towards the educational cost of students who require care and treatment outside Ontario which is covered by OHIP.

The ministry will increase the number of places in the demonstration schools by approximately 20. Placements will be phased in on an as-needed basis over a period of at least one year as eligible students come forward.

Current admission guidelines will be revised to ensure that places are available for students with learning disabilities in combination with attention deficit disorders.

A regulation will be developed to establish the provincial committee on learning disabilities and to set out its expanded mandate. The regulation will ensure that students, parents and boards have an appropriate role before the committee. It will also clarify the relationship between the committee's process and that of the existing identification placement and review committees. The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario and other affected stakeholders will be consulted about the regulation.

The expanded mandate of the provincial committee will include the following: to evaluate the needs of the pupil; to admit the pupil to a demonstration school, where appropriate; or to determine that the school board shall provide an appropriate placement for the pupil directly or through the purchase of services from another school board; or to facilitate the placement of a pupil whose primary need is for care or treatment in a government-approved care and treatment facility.

In addition, the provincial committee will be asked to

make recommendations about the appropriate placement of pupils who are returning to local school boards from a demonstration school program.

Additional funding will be made available to school boards to ensure that a small number of pupils who are eligible to attend a demonstration school receive additional support in local settings. Such funds will be provided to a school board when the provincial committee so directs.

In addition to these commitments, I have asked the ministry to take certain steps to ensure that we meet the needs of students in this transition period. I would like to advise the House of those measures.

Bill 4, as amended, provides that all students designated hard to serve prior to June 30, 1992, will continue to receive funding for their educational placement for the 1993-94 academic year. It is worth noting that these will include all students who are now designated as hard to serve in the province. The ministry will work with those students and their parents to ensure that, beginning in September 1994, they receive appropriate placements in the publicly supported education system, where the students and parents desire it.

The ministry will work with parents and boards to ensure that students who have begun the application process receive an appropriate placement within their local boards or at the demonstration schools. The same assistance will be provided to students who have applied for, but not been offered, a placement in the demonstration schools.

Finally, and to reiterate a point I made in the House some time ago, I confirm that no families will be asked to refund the ministry for funds paid towards hard-to-serve placements.

The last matter I would like to raise concerns the overall system in place for exceptional students in our province. The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario has advised me of its concerns about the accountability of the existing system. They have suggested that enforcement of the Education Act and regulations and the proper operation of the identification, placement and review system by local school boards is the best guarantee that all students in Ontario will receive the placement they need. I share their desire to ensure that our current system works well for all students in an atmosphere of cooperation between parents and school boards. In order to address these concerns, I have agreed to do the following:

First, I will ask the Minister's Advisory Committee on Special Education to review the IPRC process and make recommendations to ensure the necessary accountability of the system.

Second, I will ask the advisory committee to review a draft of the guidelines for the parent handbook distributed by boards. The purpose of this review will

be to ensure that all parents are aware of the programs offered at provincial and demonstration schools.

In conclusion, I would like to thank again the members of the standing committee on social development, my parliamentary assistants and all those who took part in the consultations. I believe the process that has been used and the problems that have been identified have been resolved to the point that they have been because of the cooperation between the members of the committee and the ministry. I very much appreciate that approach.

The Acting Speaker: Questions or comments on the minister's remarks? Further debate?

Mr Charles Beer (York North): I am pleased to rise as we conclude the debate on Bill 4 and would want, at the outset, to underline that in our hearings I think all members of the committee worked very hard at trying to find some solutions to some of the issues we were facing. I certainly appreciate the work of both my colleagues in the opposition as well as on the government side.

One of the things I would want to put on the record at the outset is that even with a committee that wanted to try to do its job and to deal with all the various components of Bill 4, I think it did underline the difficulty of dealing with what we call omnibus legislation. There were a number of very key and critical issues here which, frankly, we believe should have been in separate bills to really allow for a broader public discussion and to make sure there would be an ability for more people and more groups to come before the committee. I say that because I think many of these issues, particularly in the education area, are ones where there are some very deeply held convictions, whether it's junior kindergarten or the hard-to-serve issue or that of child care. These are ones that I think we need a broader discussion on. I simply want to put that on the record at the beginning.

1630

I want to make just a few comments and I don't plan to talk at great length, because as the minister has said, I think we had an opportunity to discuss these issues in detail, both at second reading and in committee.

I begin, then, with the minister's statement, which has largely dealt with the whole issue of hard-to-serve, I think quite appropriately. As the minister has noted and I think we all experienced, both in the committee and also in terms of people who came to see us about this bill, when dealing with special education, we are dealing with an issue that if your child has an exceptionality, has special needs, you can't wait till next month, next year, five years; you want to make sure those programs and those supports are in place so that your child will be able to maximize his or her potential.

So we heard some very compelling and really very

frustrated and in some ways tragic testimony from parents who believed, and I think we would have to agree, that somehow the system had failed them, that we were not able as a society to provide the kinds of programs and services that people needed. We were faced with the issue that the government wanted to remove the hard-to-serve designation from the Education Act. It was our view that this should have been dealt with in a broader piece of legislation that would have encompassed a number of other changes to the whole area of special education.

But given that we had to deal with it in terms of the omnibus bill, through the presentations from the witnesses who came before us and through discussion among committee members, I think we do recognize that the statement the minister has made sets out in Hansard, in the public record, a series of steps which the government will now take. I accept the sincerity with which those proposals have been made and simply say to the minister that we will be watching with more than casual interest to ensure that those things do come to pass.

I think it would not surprise the minister to hear that a number of the groups out there—and to be very honest, no matter who the government is, there is a lot of cynicism about what any of us has done in government in terms of really addressing some of the particularly difficult special needs that some families have in the province, so I think it is important that we try to make sure that the process the minister has laid out here will be one that will work.

In particular, I hope he would ensure that there is as broad a discussion as possible around the regulation which is going to be developed to establish the Provincial Committee on Learning Disabilities, a committee which exists but which is going to have an expanded mandate. Again, the minister has said that will be done. I think it is important, and I think that way we can come up with the best possible regulation. The expanded mandate of the committee, which is touched on in the minister's statement and which we discussed in committee, reiterates those points; I think those are very good ones, very important ones.

I also think it was critical that we remove from the legislation, and through amendment we did remove, what appeared to be possibly a mechanism whereby the provincial government could seek to take money back from families which had already received it for educating their child or their children. The minister noted that he had, in answer to a question in the House, said he wouldn't do that. That has been removed from the legislation. I think it's important to underline that this has happened.

In finishing my remarks with respect to this hard-to-serve issue, as we go forward and put in place this new process and this new structure, even though we know

that in terms of numbers, we're dealing with a relatively small number of pupils who have these so-called hard-to-serve needs, we recognize as parents, or if we don't have children, certainly we recognize how our own parents felt, the importance of ensuring that we deal with each child as an individual and, particularly in this period of transition, that we do everything we can to work with the parents of those who are hard to serve to make sure they get the kinds of services they need.

I would hope as we approach this that this will have a very positive impact on the demonstration schools, the programs that we have here in this province, because I think a number of us noted that one of the things that is very frustrating is where parents have to send their children not only out of Ontario but out of Canada to find the appropriate services. We have to do a much better job at making sure that those services are here.

On that particular topic of hard to serve, while we would have preferred to have handled this in a different way, with a separate bill, we believe the commitment that has been made by the government is an important one and that it does provide greater protection and guarantees to families. It is therefore all the more important that we ensure that those guarantees and commitments are real and that people can see direct benefits from those changes.

The second point I want to address is the amendments that were brought to the Education Act dealing with the Day Nurseries Act and the change through the Day Nurseries Act that will allow school boards to run child care centres. As you know, in the legislation at the present time, while it provides for child care centres in schools, they must be run by community groups.

We have brought forward an amendment to the government's proposal to try to stress the need that representative community groups run these centres, but we do recognize that in certain parts of the province, in certain situations, it is difficult to do that, and school boards have asked if they can have the authority and the power to run those day care centres.

Again we regret that this issue is not being resolved within a broader debate around the provision of child care. We noted in committee, as well as during second reading, that the government had a draft cabinet proposal around the future provision of child care and the role of the education system, but we are still waiting for any final proposals that are going to come forward.

This really is an issue where there is not a consensus out there in the population and where we need to have that kind of debate around what kind of child care we want, the facilities we need, how we're going to support parents in a whole variety of different workplace situations in providing the kind of child care we need.

We say to the government, as it goes forward now with this bill, which will undoubtedly pass today, that

it is critical that this clause not be used as a kind of back-door approach of turning over the child care system to the education system. I think we need to look at that very, very carefully to determine if that is in fact the way we want to go and what mix we want to see in the provision of child care.

While our party does not object to the fact that school boards may in effect run child care centres within schools, it is still our belief that we need to have a very flexible and adaptable system that will have many players to meet many different kinds of needs. We would simply urge the government to ensure that when it develops its framework, that it has a full debate in this House and that it has a full debate in terms of public hearings.

1640

The other issue that the minister noted and that we spent some time on related to student suspensions, and I think both my colleague from London North and I spoke about this issue. Some amendments were moved to try to strengthen it. We felt that there were comments made on behalf of a number of teachers' organizations where we needed to agree that we have a problem with the safety in schools, and we've got to make sure that there's flexibility so that principals and teachers can deal with situations that become very difficult.

By the same token, we wanted to ensure that if a student is suspended, that child—or that young adult, in many cases—is going to be able to be directed to the kinds of services that are available in the community to get the help that he or she needs to be able to return to school and to get the maximum benefit out of his or her time at school. So we think there have been some important changes made there as well.

The minister also noted that the private member's bill which my colleague the member for Oriole, Mrs Caplan, had brought in had also been brought in and made part of the bill. We thank the government for working with Mrs Caplan and bringing that in. We think it's important. As was noted, there have been problems around refugee children in particular who have been denied access to schools. We simply want to ensure that whatever the jurisdictional battles that go on between the federal and provincial governments or the province and school boards, those are not visited upon children, that we make sure that when there are children in this country, they are going to be able to go to school and get the education they need. That was the aim of Mrs Caplan's bill. The government has placed that within this omnibus bill, and we support that.

I mentioned at the beginning that one of the difficulties with omnibus bills is that they're frustrating because there are things that you agree with and there are things that you disagree with. The one issue, and it was a fundamental and is a fundamental issue in the bill, is that around junior kindergarten and the whole

question of the mandatory nature which the government has now set out with respect to the provision of junior kindergarten.

I want to be brief but I want to be very clear that what we have said is that at a time of budgetary restraints through the social contract, through a variety of constraints that have been imposed upon school boards, this is not a time when we can be mandating programs, and that at this point in time we should have left what existed whereby school boards were, as they could, implementing junior kindergarten. While most have, of the 18 or 19 that haven't—I forget the exact number—those are, for the most part, large boards in fast-growing areas. Those who came before the committee, my own board from York region, but others from Wellington and Durham and other boards, at this point in time want to develop their programs, but without recognizing that the dollars would be there, this was just something that they couldn't do if it were to be mandated. So what our advice is, and was, is don't mandate this program unless you can make sure that the dollars flow.

We had proposed an amendment with respect to capital dollars which was defeated, unfortunately, and which we felt would have been of help. We had a long discussion in the committee around the capital dollars that the government has made available with respect to junior kindergarten. I want to stress that I think it's very important that those dollars continue to flow, but in our view, it is not sufficient to make this program a mandatory one.

By all means, we believe, and I think most of the representatives, if not all of those who came and spoke on behalf of the growth boards, made the point that they believe there was much of value in junior kindergarten programs, but at this point in time, it must be left optional. Let the local communities make that decision. Because the government has chosen to go forward with the bill in the form that it put it forward in, we are not able to support that. For that reason, we can't support the bill. But as I say, there are other parts of it that we do support.

Finally, I would note that the changes that are being made to the use of American Sign Language, we support. I think that is a most positive change. We had a fair bit of discussion on how that was going to work, and I think that is something that will certainly be of real benefit to those children and young people in the school system who either cannot hear or who have hearing disabilities of various kinds.

I close my remarks by saying again that I think we ought to have dealt with some of these issues in a broader context and through at least two bills, if not three, so that we could have had more effective public participation in the discussion.

I think we still need to have a broader discussion

around special education. The changes which the minister has noted in his comments are welcome, and I would hope that when the council on special education completes its work, it will lead to that broader bill that at one time we expected and we want to discuss.

As I said, there are a number of things we think are supportable and are going forward. We do think the government needs to rethink its approach on junior kindergarten and for that reason we cannot support the omnibus bill in total.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Questions and/or comments?

Mrs Yvonne O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau): I'd like to first of all commend my colleague the member for York North not only for what he's done today on this bill but for all the many people he has met with outside of this chamber on these issues—I was part of some of those meetings—and certainly for the work he did in the committee, along with the other members of the social development committee.

I would like to suggest and add to some of the things he said regarding more active participation, because we had more requests for hearings than hearings that were held, and I find that rather difficult in a bill of this magnitude.

There's still much work to be done in this province, even when this bill passes, by teachers and by trustees, indeed by students and parents. This bill has a lot of work to be done in the local setting. It requires a great level of trust and I hope the trust can be well placed, because we have over three times in this document read by the minister today "appropriate educational placement."

Appropriate educational placement costs money, and in the publicly supported school system which is under stress that money must come from the province as well as from the ratepayers.

With the removal of the hard-to-serve designation then, as my colleague the member for York North has stated, there is a real difficulty knowing whether what's going to happen is going to be as good as what we have, and we know this is a very, very small number of students, but students with very great needs.

My colleague also stated that the students in suspension are going to have extra care, and I'm really pleased that our amendment was accepted, that these people, the families and the students, will be given every resource possible as they try to rebuild a difficult situation.

I again commend my colleague the critic for Education in the Liberal Party and he will continue his good work, I am sure.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments?

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I just wish to speak briefly about special education programs

and the hard-to-serve children in our province. As the spokesperson for people with disabilities for our PC caucus, I just want to be sure that this government does make a realistic commitment to those people with special needs.

I think it's unfortunate that the government decided to lump its special education amendments in with all the other items in this omnibus bill. I feel that in that manner these amendments no longer got the attention they deserve, and we, as the PC Party, feel that all children would benefit from integration, and that if those children who fall into that category of integration, if the parents wish that for their children, we feel they should have that opportunity.

But we feel there are a number of concerns which need to be addressed to make the integration option successful. Certainly this government has to provide provincial resources to support that program, and I think whatever the education needs are of our children with special needs in this province, that has to be first and foremost, the major priority of this government.

I don't think it's too much to ask for the priority to be made in terms of human need first, and with special-education children there's no question that they can't survive without special programs. Other kids, let's face it, will survive one way or another, but special-needs children do not have that advantage.

1650

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? If there are none, then I would recognize the honourable member for York North.

Mr Beer: I'll be very brief. I think what both my colleagues from Ottawa-Rideau and Mississauga South were underlining was the need in this area, especially dealing with special needs, to work together. I certainly know in both Mississauga and Ottawa there have been very active community and parent organizations, whether through Community Living or through other groups that exist, that have really fought long and hard back to the time when the first special-education bill came in in the early 1980s.

I say to the minister, and I think he would accept, that all of us seek the same goal and what we must do is continue to work together to ensure that we can provide the best education possible for all of our children with special needs.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): It is with mixed feelings that I respond to this legislation this afternoon, and I have to tell you that most of it has to do with the process.

We all found ourselves on June 13, a couple of years ago, looking at Bill 125 when it was first introduced. A little later, about a year later, we dealt with Bill 20, in May 1992. Then Bill 88, October 1992, and then Bill

114, on May 30, 1991, was the special-education legislation. Then, furthermore, Bill 37 received its first reading on June 2, 1992, about a year ago, with regard to special education.

I have to advise the government—not specifically this minister—that there was work that had to be done and some of it, in fact, could have been introduced under the title omnibus legislation. Some of it was clearly, in all of our views, necessary amendments to the Education Act in long standing, but some parts of this legislation are clearly parts that need extensive, in my view, public deliberation and debate.

The three that I would underline in that regard would be, first of all, compulsory junior kindergarten; secondly, the education for hard-to-serve students in the province of Ontario; and, thirdly, the whole issue of who should be responsible for operating child care facilities, whether it be the Ministry of Community and Social Services or the Ministry of Education, and the whole issue of early childhood education in the province of Ontario.

I know that the minister is anxious for us to pass this legislation, but I regret seriously that the proper and appropriate amounts of time for public consultation and discussion were not provided, at least in the three areas that I've mentioned, and I say that for a number of reasons.

Many of us in political positions don't always have the opportunity to be updated with regard to the day-to-day operations of our schools, especially as they relate to programs that are new or programs for the very challenged students in our school system. The kind of research and programming that's going on, I think, around the world and in North America, certainly in Canada and especially here in Ontario, is worthy of our serious consideration and is worthy of our consideration not only for support but for change as required.

We know here in Ontario that there are families that look to this province for our leadership and for the programs that we've been able to pass and provide over the years. There are also other parts of North America where some of our young people have to go to school because they in fact have programs that are more successful than our own, not because we wouldn't like to provide them but because in some areas they've just made more significant gains, not only in the provision of the day-to-day programming but in the involvement of parents and certainly in the area of research, whether it be medical or educational.

For that reason, I think that I myself, and I know that many members of special groups that support our young people and our school-age students—who I think still deserve and require for the success of our province and our country to receive at a very early age the best education programs that we can provide for them.

I just have to say to the minister, who I do appreciate being in the House this afternoon, because I know he is a minister who does take the time to listen—and every once in a while he makes some pretty good speeches, and I thank him for the remarks this afternoon and for his compliments. I think there were parts of the legislation where we did work together to make improvements, and I do appreciate that opportunity.

I don't appreciate the fact that this standing committee only had a few afternoons—I think it was some six afternoons—to deliberate some pretty important changes to the Education Act. I don't appreciate the fact that we sent out throughout the province an announcement that invited citizens to attend our standing committee meetings that began on June 7. Most of them had less than two weeks' warning—maybe three, to be kind—on the public deliberations of this legislation.

I really felt that this probably could have been better dealt with perhaps over the summer. I would have preferred it next fall, because I think that, like all others in Ontario, people do need a break and many of our educators, and our parents especially and our young people, are thinking other things during the month of June and now especially in the middle of July. Who would have guessed that we would still be here talking about educational changes that will affect the lives of our young people?

Many of the families won't have warnings about these kinds of changes. I think educators are on hold right now to see what opportunities this bill will provide for, especially the hard-to-serve students. Many non-profit groups are looking towards entering our school system with regard to the provision of child care. Many educators are not here and available to give the kind of direction and support to these groups as a result of this legislation, because they in fact will be given the opportunity to assist in the management.

I also believe that there are many school boards that will complain about the fact that, once again, this ministry, this government, is downloading programs that they neither want nor need on local taxpayers. I'm now specifically talking about junior kindergarten programs, where we have had many school boards talk to us about the fact that that wouldn't be their priority.

We know in fact that we have almost taken—I'm trying to count them here for the minister—some 19 boards in fact that will not have programs next September, and they intended not to provide these programs because the education dollar in their particular municipality was going to be spent in different ways. In fact one board that has a program now had at one time passed a motion to discontinue it in September 1993.

I have to say to the minister that in fact he was a member of a campaign team that went out in the last election and was appalled at the former Liberal government that thought up programs at Queen's Park, decided

that they were important for school boards, school boards decided that in fact they weren't important, and instead the government of the day moved forward and required not only smaller classes in the elementary grades, but certainly the junior kindergarten programs began under their particular government.

I thought the minister might like to hear what he said, actually. During the 1990 election campaign, in response to the OSSTF questionnaire, this is what the Premier said:

"The NDP opposes the Liberals"—

Hon Mr Cooke: Those were all done centrally.

Mrs Cunningham: The minister tells me these were done centrally. Ours were too, but I'm stuck with a few things we said, and every once in a while I have to remind you what you said.

"The NDP opposes the Liberals passing the buck to the municipal level. A New Democratic government would provide"—and I think this is even more important—"100% provincial funding for appropriate specialist staff."

That applies in the implementation of this legislation.

"This would ensure that hard-to-serve students have an equal opportunity to reach their potential regardless of the strength of the local municipal taxation base."

Everybody knows that we have a by-election in the neighbouring riding to the minister, and I know that some of these clauses are going to be made very much available for the deliberation of the taxpayers when they're making their selection of the candidate. I also know that this minister will have to live up to the changes that he makes in the next campaign, which will probably be a couple of years from now, although I'm sure members of the government would wish that they would be sooner, not to speak of the taxpayers.

1700

I have to tell you right now, Mr Speaker, and certainly I'll advise the minister, that when it comes to special education programs and services, this was a government that made a very clear commitment to families of hard-to-serve students. I think that in good faith, the minister today, and I'm going to quote from his own speech, has said that he hopes that they will be able to meet the needs of the hard-to-serve students, even though I will remind him that we amended this legislation to the extent that we expected the clause to remain in the Education Act.

What we would have preferred was that the committee be provided with the success or failure rate of the hard-to-serve recommendations that the minister has received in the past, perhaps, 10 years so that we could take a look at where we have had some success and where we should be moving forward. There are programs outside of Ontario and Canada that we're very much aware of. I'm certainly aware of the staff and the

professionals at the Trillium School, who look for leadership around the world, as others look to our province for leadership in things that we're particularly good at.

But he did say today that Bill 4 will permit the minister to pay towards the educational costs of students who require care and treatment outside Ontario which is covered by OHIP, and I approve. Certainly I shouldn't say "I." I think the public of Ontario would approve of that direction, and it is a necessity, not that the education dollar is being certainly extended far beyond its ability to cope. Perhaps some of the health care money and some of the social service money should be considered for direction towards the cost to educate many of our young people with learning and other physical disabilities.

"The ministry will increase the number of places in the demonstration schools by approximately 20. Placements will be phased in on an as-needed basis, over a period of at least one year," as qualified applicants come forward.

I would ask the minister how he chose the number 20. If this is a budget item, then I think we ought to know about it. We are certainly aware of at least that many young people, whose parents and associations, on their behalf, made presentations to the committee. More importantly, more of them wrote letters and made us aware of their special needs. I know the minister is going to be very busy dealing with these in the next few weeks and months.

The good thing, I think, that came out of these committee hearings—although a lot more could have been dealt with in a more careful way and I think we could have probably made better decisions if we had taken this section of the bill and dealt with it separately, which I thought was the intent of the government at one time. We would have learned a lot more about our demonstration schools in Ontario, and demonstration schools—I think they're probably referred to as independent schools in parts of the United States. I would have enjoyed that opportunity, and I think the government would have gained a lot from that.

It goes on to say—so I'm now saying, why did you choose the number 20?—"Current admission guidelines will be revised to ensure that places are available for students with learning disabilities in combination with attention deficit disorders."

I'm glad the minister is doing that, but you didn't have to change the legislation to do it. That's ongoing administration of the Education Act itself. I'm glad that you're changing it. I can't imagine that anybody didn't understand that attention deficit disorders are all part of the whole learning disability challenge and I can't imagine somebody just finding that out.

The regulation that will be developed to establish the

provincial committee on learning disabilities and to set out its expanded mandate: I was pleased to note that the minister said that he would consult with the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, and I think he should consult with other associations that would be interested as well. In fact, he did say "other affected stakeholders." I hope, although it's a regulation, that it will be treated with the same kind of respect and authority that section 37 of the act had before it was removed from the bill.

The expanded mandate of the provincial committee, as the minister described to us today, is to include the following: "to evaluate the needs of the pupil." I really hope that somebody takes the time to talk to the local school boards and the local IPRC committees, and that no one duplicates and slows down the placement of any young person because we have yet another provincial committee.

I really feel that in education right now, especially with children with learning disabilities, it takes so long, first of all, not so much for their needs to be evaluated but to find the appropriate placements. It may seem like a time-consuming and expensive process, but I know all of us understand and know that any delay in appropriate programming will only take away from the opportunities of the young people to succeed. We know what happens to our young students who don't succeed and who do not receive the appropriate programming in our school systems.

If we're talking about money, I can tell you, and you know, Mr Speaker, yourself, as do other members in this Legislative Assembly, that we spend far too much money in our court system, in our mental hospitals and in other jurisdictions throughout Ontario to support people who haven't had the proper prevention services and the proper treatment facilities and the proper education programs to help them to the best of our ability as a province, as taxpayers, as citizens who are interested in the success rate of our young people so that they can become contributing citizens.

Unfortunately, and I think the minister understands this, the school system is, at this time, the great success story for these families. There are many areas where we can improve. I use the word "unfortunately" carefully because I think we should be working with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services to provide the added funding we need for the social and mental and physical health needs of these young people, because these are not just educational disabilities we're dealing with.

When we leave young people with learning disabilities too long, we then have the health and social service disabilities because they become behaviour problems and they become depressed and they don't have the hope and aspirations we would want them to have.

I have spoken a lot to the hard-to-serve section of this

bill. I must say that I had hoped to be able to learn more, to make better decisions and to support the government in a more effective manner through the deliberation of this bill when it was introduced separately, either as Bill 114 or as Bill 37, so that we could have dealt with it in a more thorough and efficient manner.

There are a couple of other sections I wanted to talk about. First of all, this omnibus bill dealt with some 28, I believe, separate and unrelated changes to the Education Act. I've already stated that I don't think this is the way we should be making changes in the province of Ontario.

I really don't know why we couldn't have had some discussions about early childhood education; the junior kindergarten programs; the role of schools and child care centres; the appropriate management processes; the reason we have empty child care facilities in our new secondary and elementary schools in certain communities; why non-profit boards need the kind of support they do to get up and going and be operational and successful; why it is another downloading to ask educational managers to supervise and help non-profit child care boards; who is going to give the dollars for this educational administration to the local boards. No one talked about that.

We asked many questions in committee. We didn't always get the kinds of answers we had hoped for. But I do think that in the area of junior kindergarten, this is something that down the road you'll see future governments move away from, because I don't believe that three- and four-year-olds need to be in every school system throughout the province of Ontario.

1710

I think that for many of them, their real needs are in the area of child care; many families are being pressured, in fact. It then becomes a universal program by nature of peer pressure for both parents and young children. If we really look at the needs of three-year-olds, they probably need to nap and take walks and play outside to a far greater extent than we allow them to do in many of our school systems, especially in our rural Ontario systems where busing is so expensive and we find these young people not in a two-and-a-half-hour program but in all-day programs.

We need some very serious discussions about what we do in Ontario with regard to providing programs as appropriate and as essential from time to time for three- and four-year-olds, either in our child care system or in our education system. I'm not pleased with the direction. It's not news; the minister knows that. I'm certainly around and available to assist, as appropriate; it's probably an area I know a little bit about. I have to say that the staff within the ministries and I do have discussions about these kinds of things, and I'm always appreciative of the fact that they ask my opinion from

time to time.

I did want to advise the minister, with regard to the public school boards in Ontario right now, that I believe they ought to be complimented for the work they are doing in special education and for the—

Hon Mr Cooke: Did you see that, Dianne?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes, I saw. My time's up. The minister wished I'd stopped about 10 years ago—10 years ago is probably correct—10 minutes ago. There is some discipline within our caucus, so I will wind down.

But I did want to say, Mr Minister, in all seriousness, that the school boards across this province are making tremendous efforts in the area of special education programs and we've made great gains in the last decade. I think we should build on our great strengths and improve upon our areas of weakness.

I wanted to conclude by saying that there are parents who are advising us of their tremendous concerns with regard to their own children.

They're telling us that we do have young people, especially people in their teenage years, who have been identified as being learning-disabled for some five or six years; the minister will be hearing about a number of these. We also know that these young people who are learning-disabled have been diagnosed or found to be, through doctors of psychology and otherwise through testing, very intelligent. Some of these young people, of course, are the hard-to-serve.

We know that the parents have taken a look at the demonstration schools in Ontario and also the independent schools. They've looked at the purpose of these schools, the programs that are available, the instructional methods, the instructional levels, the educational goals, the teaching staff, the program focus.

These are people who want the best for their children and who have spent most of their lives trying to find the right answers. They've taken a look at the differences between the length of their school year; how families are included in the programming; whether staff are there in the daytime or the evening; whether they have meals that staff are part of; the recreation time of young people, which is extremely important, whether it's supervised or whether the staff is part of it, whether it's structured; ratios; success rates of all of the programs; and, just as importantly, the cost.

Many of these parents who have written to me and, I know, the minister, have advised us of the expense of our schools here in Ontario. You know how expensive it is at the Trillium School. They've also advised us that there are other schools outside of the province that are running programs at one third to one half the cost per pupil. We should be seriously looking at the success rates of both programs, whether here in Ontario or out of the province, and the cost for the government of Ontario if in fact we have to send some of our young

people to schools, especially American schools, to help, as we've been told, to change the lives of these young people.

In closing, I have to say that my great criticism would be of the process. I don't believe there was enough time for public debate. I think many of the special groups of people we depend on to advise us as they represent special students, as they represent professionals, as they represent school boards, were particularly rushed to deal with at least the new sections of this education bill.

I do agree with the minister that where possible we did have good exchange of ideas and did make a couple of good amendments. I have to advise him that he only accepted one of the 15 that we offered, but that was probably one more than the last committee I sat on.

Interjection.

Mrs Cunningham: I think probably four out of some 20, and the one we put forward that was accepted was the one that was put forward by the OSSTF. The one you spoke to actually was an amendment that the Progressive Conservative caucus put forward.

But the problem, and I'm sure the minister would agree with me, was the amount of time we had. The other problem we have in this Legislative Assembly, particularly in committee, is members who go to those committee meetings who are not as well versed as they ought to be, who sometimes get their marching orders—not all the time—from the government and where there isn't the opportunity to make the exchanges of ideas and accept a reasonable amendment.

All I can say is thank goodness for the staff who are listening carefully to our debate and sometimes go back to the minister and say: "Do you want to know something? That member" or "that party had a good idea. It's worth your consideration." Far too many of the elected members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario go to committee meetings, they are not well versed, they do not ask questions and they don't listen.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): That's insulting, Dianne.

Mrs Cunningham: That is not insulting; that is the truth. I speak for all parties, but especially members of the government. It is a fact; it may be insulting. Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. Sometimes, as the member for London South reminded me earlier today, the truth does hurt.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): A very brief comment in response to the speech by the member for London North. I simply want to compliment my fellow member of the Ontario Legislature, also the deputy leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, for her eloquence in the way she's represented so many concerned about the questions that have arisen in

respect to this piece of legislation and the fact that she has done such an able job on behalf of so many who are interested in the education systems in the province of Ontario. I simply want to compliment her on a job well done.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? If there are none, the honourable member for London North has two minutes to make a response.

Mrs Cunningham: I am particularly surprised at some of the members of the government who feel somewhat offended by my observations. I say if the truth hurts, tough; if the shoes fits, wear it. There are far too many people who get elected in this Legislative Assembly who go into committee and who have not done their homework.

The minister reminds me that it's the responsibility of the critics. When I sit on a committee and my colleagues sit on committee, it's the responsibility of all of us. When I say "my colleagues," I mean every member of this House. It's their responsibility to find out about the legislation, to get themselves briefed and to contribute to the democratic process.

I object to people saying that I am being unfair. I think that was the word—in fact, the word was "insulting." Well, I have to say that I think one of the down-sides of this House and of the committees is that far too many people don't stand up and try to present solutions to the problems as we face them here in Ontario. I'm very proud that from time to time I am able to do that.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate. If there's no further debate, then I would call on the honourable minister to wrap up.

Hon Mr Cooke: I'll just move third reading of Bill 4.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Cooke has moved third reading of Bill 4. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion, please say "aye."

Those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Carried.

It is resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

1720

RETAIL BUSINESS HOLIDAYS AMENDMENT ACT
(SUNDAY SHOPPING), 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT
LA LOI SUR LES JOURS FÉRIÉS
DANS LE COMMERCE DE DÉTAIL
(OUVERTURE DES COMMERCES LE DIMANCHE)

Mr Mills, on behalf of Mr Christopherson, moved third reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail en ce qui concerne l'ouverture des

commerces le dimanche.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Does the honourable member have some opening remarks?

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I have at hand here an opening statement which I'm not going to use, because I think that, in fairness to everyone in the Legislature, this is a matter that we've covered over and over again. There's been so much debate on the so-called Sunday shopping. I know that I myself, along with some of my colleagues in the committee, toured the province on many occasions to listen to the comments from the people who appeared before that committee. I think the whole subject matter has been well thrashed out. I'd also like to point out that after all is said and done, Sunday shopping has been in effect for the last 18 months or so.

In closing, I would just like to thank all members and all parties that have participated in this debate over the months. I'd like to thank all those people who appeared before the committees, their different points of view. We're all different in many respects and we can't always do what everybody wishes that we could do, but nevertheless I think this bill is very, very important to be passed. Without much more ado, I will sit down in my place and await the vote.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments? If there are none, further debate? There being none, do you have any concluding remarks?

Mr Mills: No, thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Mills, on behalf of the minister, has moved third reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion, please say "aye."

Those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

FARM REGISTRATION AND FARM ORGANIZATIONS FUNDING ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR L'INSCRIPTION DES ENTREPRISES AGRICOLES ET LE FINANCEMENT DES ORGANISMES AGRICOLES

Mr Buchanan moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 42, An Act to provide for Farm Registration and Funding for Farm Organizations that provide Education and Analysis of Farming Issues on behalf of Farmers / Loi prévoyant l'inscription des entreprises agricoles et le financement des organismes agricoles qui offrent des services d'éducation et d'analyse en matière de questions agricoles pour le compte des agriculteurs.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Does the honourable minister have any opening remarks?

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Very briefly, as members know, Bill 42 replaces Bill 105, the Farm Organizations Funding Act, and responds to concerns that were raised following the introduction of Bill 105. The purpose of this proposed legislation is to ensure that Ontario's general farm organizations receive the kind of stable financial support they need to continue serving all Ontario farmers.

The efforts of the general farm organizations of this province are considerable. They have brought strength and unity to our entire agriculture and food industry. Their initiatives include education, research and providing policy advice to the government. This bill will help ensure their important work will continue. It will also improve the government's ability to develop and implement effective plans and programs for the benefit of the entire agriculture and food community.

Under the legislation, all Ontario farm businesses with gross incomes of \$7,000 or more will be required to register with my ministry and update the information annually. These farm businesses will also be required to pay an annual fee of \$150 to one of three general farm organizations: the Christian Farmers' Federation of Ontario, the Ontario region of the National Farmers' Union and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. Other farm organizations with a broad-based mandate are also welcome to apply to be recognized for funding purposes.

Bill 42 provides eligible farm businesses with the option of requesting a full refund of the farm organization's fee from the appropriate general farm organization. As well, this bill does not contain an offence provision, and rather than creating a farm organization funding corporation, the bill allows my ministry to assume the role of collecting and distributing farm organization fees and farm business data. The legislation also provides for special funding to an eligible francophone farm organization.

This legislation was developed in partnership with the three general farm organizations that I mentioned earlier. I'd like to thank them for their dedicated efforts. I would also urge the members of the House to encourage the important work of Ontario's general farm organizations by supporting this legislation.

Just in conclusion to my opening remarks, I would like to thank the opposition critics. We have worked closely on this bill. We've been at this with the general farm organizations and with the two opposition parties for some two and a half years now. We have tried to get it right. I think we have it right now. I encourage all members to indeed support Bill 42.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I was very interested in the initial remarks of the Minister of

Agriculture because we in the Niagara region are of course confronting a very difficult problem. The minister may not be aware of this—and I was surprised perhaps in his initial remarks he didn't refer to this—that the price of cherries is considerably below the cost of production.

I have had farmers who have phoned my constituency office to register a complaint. They have said that they have phoned the Minister of Agriculture's office and can't get through. Well, that's understandable. You would have people calling from all over Ontario. I'm not being critical of that, but I know that the minister wanted to be aware that the cherry farmers are very concerned about that. How they feel on this bill, I suppose depends on which one you talk to.

There is, as the minister is well aware, some division within the farming community on this: many who are very supportive; some who are not supportive. It's interesting, I think the minister would have noticed this himself, that even within geographic regions there are people who are for and against.

I know that it has taken a lot of discussion on his part and consultation and the contribution's been made by the opposition to try to bring together those who initially were concerned about this. But I do want him, when he is thinking of this bill, to be thinking of the farmers in the Niagara region.

I was just talking to a person who is an expert in cherries. In fact, a person by the name of Josh Wiwcharyk, who was eating cherries, and saying how good they were, from the Niagara region, but wondering how the farmers were ever going to continue to exist.

Also, I hope, while he's thinking of this bill, he remembers the conservation easements which had been promised to farmers in the Niagara region to allow them to stay on their land while preserving the agricultural land and being able to eke out a living, even if it is a subsistence in this case.

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): I won't take a lot of time. Thank you for the opportunity to the minister. I want to thank him for bringing in this bill now.

The very reason that we need a bill such as this is what the member for St Catharines just referred to. The price of cherries is down between 10 and 15 cents a pound. I'm not sure if he was aware of that, but that is way below the cost of production. I can tell you that grain producers across Ontario, and indeed across Canada, are not covering their costs of expenses.

The problem with agriculture is, what's good for a neighbour is not good for the other neighbour. It's a dichotomy that we need to get together on. I think this bill will do it. I compliment the minister on making it happen. Yes, there is some opposition, but I think now that the bill has been repaired and corrected, Mr Minis-

ter, I commend you for bringing it forth and certainly you've got my support and that of my party.

1730

Mrs Karen Haslam (Perth): In the short time that I have I would also like to commend the minister. I'm very pleased to see this come forward. I'm only sorry we can't do third reading before we break for the summer; that is, if we ever break for the summer. The summer might be over by the time we're out of here.

But I am kind of sorry that we're not going to go on and do third reading because I think it does have a majority of support of those of us here in the House and a majority of support of those of us who have rural ridings and who have the farm community contacting our offices and saying: "When are you going to bring this in? We really need it."

Yes, there are a few out there who don't want it but I think I can stress that it is a few. They may be a vocal few, but they are a few. Most of the farmers I have talked with in Perth county want to see this come forward. They need this. They think it's an admirable piece of legislation. Yes, we did have a little bit of confusion over one of the clauses and that's been taken care of, so I would like to commend the minister for bringing this in. I look forward to seeing it passed today, although it's only second reading. I'm pleased to be here to partake in that.

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): I'm going to be very brief. While I don't have tender fruit production like in the Niagara region, there's an expanding agricultural base in my riding, and the fact of cherries etc. I know that three farm organizations in my riding support this particular bill. It's a pity it can't reach third reading today. We have to wait for the fall or Christmas to get third reading of this bill. I wholeheartedly support this bill, and the farm organizations in my area also support this bill.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable minister has two minutes to make a response.

Hon Mr Buchanan: I appreciate the comments people have made. I would particularly like to refer to the comments made by the member for St Catharines when he talks about the problem we now face, particularly in the sour cherry market. In fact, cherries are now selling for 11 cents. That's what the farmers are receiving. Last year they got 42 cents and the year before they got 50 cents. Most things are going up in price, yet what farmers are receiving for cherries is going down.

It's just for that reason we need strong farm organizations that can make their issues known to the public. In some cases it's paying for marketing and advertising and in other cases it's just awareness. They need to make governments at the local, provincial and federal level aware of the problems they face. They certainly are facing a number of problems in the horticultural

industry. The sour cherries are another example, and I appreciate the member for St Catharines bringing that up.

In response to that part of his response, I want the member for St Catharines to know that at the recent ministers' meeting my number one priority was to get enhanced NISA for horticulture. This isn't necessarily the answer to all of their problems, but we are aware of the problems faced by the tender fruit industry and the sour cherry producers. We are trying to address their concerns.

This bill will allow the three general farm organizations to address those concerns, make government people aware and make the general public aware of the importance of buying Ontario-grown produce. The reason we have a problem with the price of sour cherries is that Michigan has a bumper crop this year and they are putting their product into Ontario at 11 cents a pound, which is about seven cents below the cost of production here in Ontario.

We need strong general farm organizations. The farm population is in decline and this is our attempt in cooperation with the organizations and the opposition to give general farm organizations an opportunity to have a very strong voice so they can be heard in the future.

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I'm very pleased today to put some remarks on the record on Bill 42, An Act to provide for Farm Registration and Funding for Farm Organizations that provide Education and Analysis of Farm Issues on behalf of Farmers. A long title, to be sure, but most in Ag and Food circles know this as the stable funding bill.

The dialogue around the topic of stable funding has been long in duration, many years in fact—I guess it's since the late 1960s—encompassing each party in the government and many presidents of the farm organizations. It has been at times an emotional as well as controversial debate, and, for that matter, I think it still is. But it would appear that finally some headway is being made and Bill 42 is on the way to becoming law.

I will be supporting this bill even though there are some concerns that I hope can be addressed in the hearings.

Our Liberal caucus has always supported the concept of stable funding so that the various accredited farm organizations could better provide education and analysis of farming issues, which is so key to the success of farmers trying to compete in today's markets.

Our previous Liberal government worked with the three general farm groups, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario and the National Farmers Union, in examining various proposals for obtaining fees and whether or not to make them mandatory. Progress has been slow in finding an appropriate model because it is hard to find an existing

funding mechanism to attach a fee to that would apply to all farmers.

Our government was ready to proceed with legislation in the fall of 1990, but unfortunately this was halted with the election results of September 1990. The present minister continued the dialogue and promised to bring a stable funding bill forward.

Finally, Bill 105 was launched November 26, 1992, and promptly exploded, big time. The minister lost his chance to be a hero because either he didn't know exactly what he was doing or the ministry staff and legal counsel didn't know or maybe it was (d), all of the above. At any rate, instead of solving a need out there, all efforts had to be concentrated on damage control and backtracking.

The result is what we see before us today in the new bill, Bill 42, which does seem to have addressed some of the concerns. Hopefully, the minister will listen to some of the changes we would like to see made which could make the bill even better for all concerned.

While most marketing boards and commodity organizations have legal authority to charge mandatory fees to all their members to finance their operations, general farm lobby groups, such as the OFA, CFFO or NFU, rely mainly on voluntary contributions. This necessitates committed farmers using up their valuable time to sell memberships by knocking on doors like salespeople. Keep in mind that these doors are often many kilometres apart.

In a world that is becoming increasingly competitive and complex, I believe that general-interest farm organizations are necessary in order to have balanced agricultural and food policy development. Agriculture in Ontario is a viable industry, viable if its participants stay innovative and knowledgeable about all aspects that affect the business.

General farm organizations provide valuable assistance to individual farmers and to rural communities. They increase public awareness of agriculture and focus farm policy debates among farmers and public officials. I've had the opportunity to attend some of these information nights and farm open-house visits in Northumberland, my riding. They have been most informative and go a long way to bringing urbanites into 1990s-type agriculture.

Another area that is most impressive is the up-to-date lesson plans and materials and all the information that is available for teachers to use in the classroom. This can be a most effective tool for getting the ag message out.

The work of general farm organizations creates benefits for all farmers. They provide a pipeline to the government by lobbying for orderly marketing, fair taxes, financial assistance programs, sensible land use and environmental policies. Since all farmers benefit

from any advantageous results of the farm organizations' hard work and efforts, they feel that the cost of their work should be carried by all farmers.

Approximately 20,000 of Ontario's 68,000 farmers directly support the work of general farm organizations. If the cost of such work was shared among all farmers who enjoy the benefits, a reasonable cost per farm operation would be possible.

1740

The difficulties facing agriculture continue to intensify. The individual farmer's ability to cope with issues is declining as markets become more international and business success depends upon the management of information. The farm perspective needs study and explanation more than ever before. This implies a greater demand on the resources of farmers' associations.

Last fall, the ag world was abuzz when the word was out that the long-awaited legislation was ready to be introduced by the minister in the name of Bill 105. Unfortunately, the buzz soon became a loud roar of anger and disappointment as many organization leaders and farmers realized the bad flaws in the bill, especially the penalty section. To his credit, the minister went back to the drawing board and, I'm sure upon much reflection and thought, withdrew the badly flawed bill and replaced it with Bill 42, the bill we have before us today for second reading.

The new bill is much shorter than the previous legislation and does contain some major changes. The registration fee is now refundable. Farmers are required to remit \$150 per year with their registration, but they will be able to write a letter to the designated general farm organization to ask for the money back.

The specific penalty provisions have been removed, and a provision is now in the bill that only a farmer with a valid registration number is entitled to benefit from designated programs or subsidies from the ministry. Some farmers are having trouble with that particular provision, because they are fearful about the unclarity around how a valid registration number is to be obtained.

With the registration fee, cheques are now payable directly to a general farm organization instead of the farm organization funding corporation, as was in the last bill. The corporation and its function have been dropped from the present bill.

Since becoming Ag co-critic with my colleague the member for Cornwall, I have taken the opportunity to tour around many parts of Ontario. I've always taken the opportunity to ask as many farmers as possible for their thoughts and feelings on stable funding. I would have to say that the majority I discussed the topic with were in support of the bill. Some expressed some scepticism simply because they, generally speaking,

don't trust government. But they felt strongly enough that if farm organizations had a stronger voice, then they would be better equipped to deal with government.

In my own riding of Northumberland, there is no doubt about their stand—I would have to say overwhelmingly in favour of the bill—and they expect me to vote in favour. I will be doing that, voting in favour of the bill. Interestingly enough, Northumberland was one of the few areas that supported the minister's first attempt at Bill 105 and wrote him a letter demanding that he go ahead with it. Even though I knew of the serious flaws, I would have abided by the wishes of my constituents and supported that bill.

I for one am very pleased with the changes in the new bill, Bill 42, but I am hopeful that there will be other considerations in the hearings that would be accepted by the government. I believe there definitely should be a review after three years, not just "may be a review." Any program needs to be reviewed and assessed to see that the goals are being achieved and the benefits enjoyed.

Also, I would hope that the new registration system would allow registrants to fast-track government programs and not just subject farmers to yet more red tape and duplication with more forms that somehow get lost in someone's filing cabinet.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that there are farmers out there who do not feel that this bill is democratic and therefore oppose the bill. The National Farmers Union and the group known as the Silent Majority have campaigned hard against. My Howe Island NFU voice, Peter Dowling, has expressed concern to me that they were shut out of the final meetings on Bill 42. Apparently, they did refuse to go to one meeting earlier, but that shouldn't mean they don't get invited to other meetings. Even Kim Campbell hasn't given up on Bob Rae. All the players should be given equal opportunity to participate and voice their concerns.

The Silent Majority has many concerns that I know other members may want to discuss, but I would like to put on the record that in discussion with the deputy minister she assured me that the religious consideration for the Mennonite community had been thoroughly discussed by her in a meeting with 25 of the Mennonite elders in March of this year. An agreement was reached which satisfied all.

There also seem to be some concerns around the regulations that accompany this bill. Of course, we are always wary with this government's regulations as you never know what can be hidden in regulations, which of course don't get debated in the House.

Many farmers are worried about the information that will be obtained by the government on the registration form, and more importantly, how it will be used. When

I asked the deputy minister about the registration forms, she said that they would be ready soon and that the ministry is planning a test run with a group of farmers to make sure they would adequately do the job and not be detrimental in any way.

Those of us in rural Ontario who want to see a strong, vibrant agricultural industry flourishing in Ontario realize that we must all work together to meet the challenge of producing enough food, with sufficient return for the farmer. Although we have concerns about the stable funding legislation, we want to work in partnership with farm organizations to ensure that they have the resources they need to make certain the survival of the family farm through the difficult times ahead.

I am pleased to see that it would appear now that there will be two weeks of hearings. I thought this was agreeable with everyone when I heard today that there would be two weeks of hearings. This will allow the democratic process to go and allow those who have genuine concerns to make them known, which can ultimately result in a better bill that is going to affect all farmers.

I look forward to participating in these hearings and I thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to place these remarks on the record.

Mrs Haslam: Since I'm not going to be debating at length, I'm going to take the opportunity to use a bit of time in questions and comments to say how much I appreciate the member's comments. I know that she has risen in the House a number of times to speak on behalf of her constituents and especially the agricultural sector in her constituency.

I do agree with her that the agricultural industry is a viable industry, but we all know that it needs some help. When you find farmers coming to your constituency office saying to you that they are selling their product at 5 cents a bushel or for less than it costs them to produce it, you know they need some help. I think the stable funding and assistance to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the farm organizations is one way we can help them, because it does mean we have to increase public awareness. I think we have to educate the public to how much it costs to produce the food and how important the farm industry is to all of us in Ontario.

Farmers are the land stewards and they're the ones who are very concerned about the environmental issues on their farms. Farmers are also the ones who are taking all these courses. People don't realize that farmers are small business people. They take computer courses, they take business courses, they take a lot of courses to help the small business community which they are part of.

Interjection.

Mrs Haslam: No, I'm not going to cut it short. I

have to talk for the farm community that I represent and I will not cut it short, thank you very much.

I am a firm believer in the farm community. I'm a firm believer in stable farming. I know the number of people involved in farming because of the number of people who come into my riding office about it. These are small business people, they are a viable lobby group and they should be supported.

I'm in agreement with what you say, I'm in agreement with this piece of legislation and I ask everybody to join and support this legislation today.

There, I've left nine seconds for you.

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): In the two minutes that are applied to me, there are a couple of questions which I wish to pose to the member opposite who speaks in favour of this legislation, because I have reservations about some areas of this legislation.

Let's talk about the Mennonite community which you brought up. You were reassured by the deputy minister that they would take this under consideration. I pose the question to you, how long is it going to take under the accreditation tribunal system for the exemption for the Mennonite process?

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): The minister is just down the aisle, Randy.

1750

Mr Hope: Calm down over there. I thought Mike Harris was against unions. Just relax.

I just wanted to pose another question. You mentioned the words "going from farmhouse to farmhouse," and you talked about the voluntary process. Would the member opposite not agree that the voluntary process should take place at the kitchen table, along with the family when the papers are being made out; the voluntary affiliation to the organization versus having to apply, pay your \$150 and then ask for a refund later on? Can you imagine the responses you're going to get in your constituency office when they've asked for their refund and they have not been able to get their \$150? How are you doing to deal with that as a member in that local area who's going to have call the tribunal and have to call the farm organization to get that \$150 back for those farmers? We're talking about farmers who are finding it very difficult in these times, so when you talk about the ability to be voluntary, then let's deal with it at the kitchen table.

Another thing to help the farm organizations, if the member opposite wishes: Why don't you put more applications in there, so the spouse can apply for the farm organization or the son who works on the farm? Hey, if you want it voluntary, make it voluntary and also allow my other family members who work on the farm to contribute.

I just wish to pose those questions to the member opposite who stands in support of this legislation.

Mr Bradley: I was intrigued when I was listening to the member for Chatham-Kent, who obviously has some very great concerns about this. While I know that I'm supposed to be commenting on the excellent remarks of the member for Northumberland, the Liberal critic, I was listening with a good deal of attention to all of the debate taking place, and I must say that the kind of dissent which has been expressed is refreshing within the New Democratic Party, because I know you've been unanimous on so many issues over there lately.

On the social contract, they were as one in the party, and I know there was no dissension at all in that regard. Now I see that we have a bit of dissension here. I've always respected the member for Chatham-Kent for showing this kind of independence, and I know when the discussions were on the social contract, he probably expressed those as well, because he's a strong supporter of the trade union movement and always has been in his part of the province in Ontario.

I think the Minister of Agriculture is always wise to listen to the counsel of as many people as possible. I'll tell you, I admire people who will stand up from a political party and express the kind of concerns that have been expressed this afternoon by the member for Chatham-Kent. I would have hoped he was—

Interjection.

Mr Bradley: Well, it's suggested by the Minister of Agriculture that you come to this side of the House.

Mr Hope: I will never sit over there, either side.

Mr Bradley: I would have said perhaps there was a chance of that after the next election, but perhaps you know more than I do and perhaps you won't be sitting on this side of the House. I don't know that yet; that remains to be seen.

I hope the Minister of Agriculture and Food will listen carefully to the very wise counsel which has been provided by the member for Northumberland.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? If there are none, then the honourable member for Northumberland has two minutes to make a response.

Mrs Fawcett: I thank the members who have commented on my remarks, I believe, but those are very interesting words from the member for Chatham-Kent. I have to compliment him on his attempt to represent his constituents in the best way he can, but I will remind him that his minister is to his right there.

In answering your questions, I would just suggest that maybe that's why we really need these weeks of hearings, because then all of these kinds of questions will be answered and people then will have a lot of their fears quelled.

I would also like to point out to the minister, who I know is very concerned that he will possibly not get third reading as soon as he had anticipated, that had we

come back into this sitting of the Legislature on time and had this bill come forward sooner, then possibly there would have been time for all of these things to have been discussed and maybe his wishes would have come true: that he would have got this on the road and also the OFA members and the various farm organization members would be happier as well.

They are the government and they are in the position to bring forward these bills and get them put through. You have seen there is support for the bill, so you could have had it finished.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I believe there's agreement for unanimous consent to sit past 6 for completion of this item, and therefore I request that.

The Acting Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to sit past 6 until we finish this debate? It appears there is agreement.

Mr Villeneuve: It's a pleasure to rise for this long-awaited bill. It's been a while in the mill. As a matter of fact, it had a false start, but it now looks like it's on the go.

I appreciate the comments from the member for Chatham-Kent. I know he represents a very important part of agriculture, coming from the area of Chatham-Kent. I have to think he must be speaking for the people he represents, but there's a bit of a dichotomy there, as there has been with agriculture for many years. What's good for one individual is not good for the other.

However, Bill 42, I believe, can meet the requirements of agriculture. I'll remind the member for Chatham-Kent that in the last five years we've lost just about all the beef processors we had here in Ontario. Would you believe, a lot of the people in the silent majority are saying that basically they're beef producers; they want to stay in the beef business. Well, you've got to market the stuff. Are they going to ship it to Alberta? I don't think so. That's where beef processing has gone. Why? Because governments have not looked after, attempted to support, and the industry went through a very rough time. I'm a former beef producer; I can tell you about it. I sat across from the bank manager many times to get cattle in from the west, feed them out, turn out good cattle and barely cover my expenses.

I think we need in agriculture a united front. I'm not talking about a union. I know the member for Chatham-Kent is a strong union man. I'm amazed: A lot of people are saying this is union legislation. Well, I'm sorry. It's simply attempting to survive. Family farms are the backbone of not only this province but of the economy here.

Many people would say they're not the largest but the second-largest industry. I would beg to differ because in agriculture we have the ripple effect. Less than 3% of

the population, the 10 million people in Ontario, are producers, considerably less than 3%, yet they provide all of the food that's consumed in this province and whatever's exported from this province, and they could produce a lot more if the economic climate were right.

I say we have a tremendous sleeping giant in agriculture, a food-producing province, and yes, we are protecting farm land; we're doing those things we have to do. We're not protecting farmers. Those are the people who count. They are the people with families. They are the people who are paying the taxes, tightening their belt.

I sold grain corn in 1980 at more money than they're going to get in this year's market, and it's a rising market because of the floods in the United States. It doesn't make a lot of sense to say we will survive at the whim of the market.

Governments are pulling out of research and development. The industry and the producers will have to be the ones who do the research and development. I'll go back with a little bit of history.

1800

It's not only this government that's to blame. All three parties that were in government in the last 10 years took agriculture for granted. Why? Because we always went to the supermarket and there was always a great selection of food at very affordable prices. Let's not forget that. Those of you who think that agriculture and farmers are having it too easy in this day and age, never complain with your mouth and belly full, because there may come a time—and those of us who've had the opportunity to travel to other countries can tell you that not everyone in this world has the opportunity and, indeed, the privilege of going to a supermarket and purchasing quality food, which is what we have taken for granted way too long.

In 1988, a Liberal majority cut the agricultural budget, and it was understandable because they had 95 members in this place and agriculture is only 3% of the population. So they did cut the agricultural budget by quite a number of million dollars whilst they were increasing spending in many other areas.

In 1989, the same Liberal Party announced a \$30-million cut to the farm tax rebate. I'll tell you, the former Treasurer, Mr Nixon, the member for Brant-Haldimand, got a lot of heat on it, and I say to you one of the reasons why some 35 rural members from the NDP in southwestern Ontario became members in this Legislature was that one primary reason: they fiddled around with the farm tax rebate. It cost them dearly, they now know.

I was quite disappointed that this government did not realize this when I brought my private member's bill here last Thursday, a week ago, and it did not support enshrining the farm tax rebate into a situation that it

would not be political, it would not be added to the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, which is now less than 1% of the overall budget of the province of Ontario.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): It's a money bill.

Mr Villeneuve: It's a money bill of course, but it would have locked in a rebate which is not support to the agricultural community; it's simply fairness and equity to a tax on education, on farm land and buildings that should never have been paid in the first place.

In 1990, the Liberals announced a series of surprise cuts to their agricultural budget. The five-year Ontario pork industry improvement program was cancelled with one year to go. Applications to the beginning farmers assistance program, BFAP, brought in by a Tory government, were cut off. Instead, the problem plagued the Liberals. On the Ontario Farm-Start program, which they initiated, the window was open for about five months; it was totally taken up, they ran out of money, they had to cut off the program. It was supposed to last much longer, and agriculture, once again, got the short end of the stick.

Again, these same Liberals did cut the agricultural engineering service, the municipal drains program, staff reduction was made in veterinarian labs and services to the ag rep branch, the farmers' help line and telephone service was cancelled, and the overall Liberal spending increases continued while agriculture took less and less of the budget. This is happening now again.

I realize that under the social contract the government is attempting to reduce quite a large amount of money, \$2 billion. I want to make you aware, in Agriculture and Food a 10% cut occurred in the last fiscal year and a 10% cut occurred this fiscal year. In my farmer's mathematics, that's 20%. If we were to reduce the cost of government by 20% we would not have a deficit at all. Ag and Food suffered the 20% cut in the last two years, while all other ministries, with very few exceptions, saw increases at or above inflation. In 1991, the NDP budget increased spending well in excess of inflation and yet agriculture's share of the budget declined.

The minister, a good friend of mine, has listened to the folks from on high. I see the Minister of Finance there, he's one of the boys from on high, listens well. Yet agriculture, which produces 20% of the jobs and all of the food that we consume—and I want to emphasize, 20% of the jobs directly and indirectly and yet they are the forgotten country cousins out here. "Sorry, we go to the supermarket on the weekend, or whenever, and the shelves are full, so why should we worry about agriculture?" Yet our family farms are struggling out there, I can assure you; they are struggling.

In 1992, there was a \$45-million cut by this govern-

ment to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. In 1993, the previous year's budget cuts, the NDP announced further cuts, and that was 10% per year, so we've got a 20% reduction in the last two years.

The farm tax rebate was frozen in 1992-93 at \$159 million. They saved \$7.1 million. Now, under questioning to the minister recently, he told me that he expects the tax to be 72% or 73%, the farm tax rebate, as the portion that will be refunded to agriculture.

We had two agricultural colleges, which train our future farmers, our future agribusiness people, that were cut. An independent study program and technology transfer programs from the University of Guelph were eliminated.

What we have is a shrinking portion of public moneys being turned over to agricultural funding for research and development, for all of those studies that are needed.

Under GATT negotiations, we need more proof positive of what's happening here in Ontario, here in Canada.

Stable funding is a most important aspect, particularly at this time, whenever we are faced with a global attack on the way we operate. The family farm must survive, and if it does not, we, the consumers of Ontario, will pay dearly and for ever. So we must look after that family farm.

I like the refundable aspect of this new bill, Bill 42. The previous bill apparently could have been amended, but it's always a tricky thing when there is a majority government if, for some unforeseen reason, they all decide they like what they see in the bill. I had the minister's assurance that it could be and would have been, and I appreciate that. But again, we went through the social contract, Bill 48, and we thought we submitted some excellent amendments that would have helped the government, 29 of them. Not one was accepted. It makes the opposition a little weary when these things occur.

The regulations I am concerned about, because regulations are put together by bureaucrats, who sometimes not only don't wave at farm mailboxes but seldom go out to the country. I think the bureaucrats should at least have the opportunity of dealing with the agricultural community, the folks who get their hands and feet dirty out on the farm. So I say that the regulations must be watched very closely, and in three years' time, with all due respect to my colleague the Minister of Agriculture and Food, I say that it should go to a standing committee of the Legislature, with all parties represented, to assess and analyse the first three years of stable funding.

A vote may be required, and I have no problem with a vote except that we cannot have a vote right now because we don't have a voters' list. A voters' list is

most important when you're having a vote, and yet a lot of people say, "Well, just send out ballots to the people who get the farm tax rebate." Well, I'm sorry, that doesn't work. We have many people who own different parcels of land, so we would have an individual farmer with possibly three, four, five and six votes. That's not democracy. Democracy is one person, one vote.

We have a situation here that I would like to see this bill proceed quickly. I think third reading should possibly be considered today in this Legislature. I don't know whether the Liberal Party or even members of the government would be ready to go to third reading, but I want to make sure that the regulations—and they are a lot more important than what we debate here today—are such that they meet the agricultural community's, the family farm's requirements.

1810

That's why I say in three years, Mr Speaker, through you to the minister, that we should be going to a standing committee of the Legislature. Take it away from the Minister of Agriculture, whoever he or she may be at the time. Maybe it will be my friend who is the present minister, and if it isn't, well, he will be replaced by someone. I think it should go to a standing committee of the Legislature, where all parties are represented, where concerns can be brought and indeed a solution or changes to the stable funding act, Bill 42, be brought.

I know it's way past 6 of the clock. I appreciate the acting government House leader allowing me the extra time to put these few remarks on the record. I am supportive of stable funding in order to save the family farm, to save agriculture and to have people who are able to put it all together in spite of the dichotomy that faces agriculture in many instances.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments? If there are no questions or comments, further debate?

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a comment on the statement of the member for S-D-G & East Grenville. He must be looking at a somewhat different financial statement than we are looking at when he talks about the cuts between 1985 and 1990. I think, with the statements that he made, he should check his facts.

The other thing that he mentioned was on the municipal drainage. It used to be one-third provincial, one-third municipal and one-third federal. The cut there was the federal program that his own Tory government was involved in. I know that the former government, with a drain that's right in his own backyard, the province of Ontario came up and paid the one third on that drain because the federal government wouldn't. It is very interesting that he should bring that up.

The other thing I should mention—and I agree with what he had said in the beef and the cash crop. I've been involved in agriculture all my life and I know that

what was being sold last year was as low as it was many, many years ago. Those are my remarks.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? If there are none, the honourable member has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Villeneuve: I thank my colleague from Cornwall for his participation. Yes, there were considerable cuts by the Liberal government, particularly when one considered the total overall budget in relation to that portion which was allocated to agriculture. Yes, after a lot of lobbying on the Payne drain—I remember it very well—we did get some additional funding right in Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. However, the federal joint program on drainage had run out in 1981. I'm not going to get petty, and you know who was the Prime Minister in 1981. That did run out at that time, the agreement—

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): And it was restored in 1984.

Mr Villeneuve: No, it was not restored at all, and that's why the federal government wasn't able to participate. However, let's not get too political here. We're dealing with agriculture and the survival of family farms and the survival of the industry itself. It's a very important industry.

We live on the fringes and we know that last year—on the fringes in that when the temperature and the weather do not go with you, you are very much at the mercy of not only the elements but also markets that can be very unkind.

The Americans in the Midwest, in the breadbasket of America, as they like to call it, where corn and soybeans are king, are going through terrible flooding. The only reason why the markets are strong—and I know the minister is smiling because the markets are strong, because over \$100 million was paid out last year in crop insurance.

Let's hope that we have a crop that ripens, a good crop that the crop insurance fund can replenish, because we cannot drain again. We need to have a strong lobby group, people who will replace governments in doing the R&D so that agriculture can put its right foot forward continuously.

Mr Cleary: I am pleased to participate in the stable funding debate, as Bill 42 is perhaps recognized as. In one form or another, it has been considered in the Legislature, in farm organizations, in boardrooms and of course in the fields and farms for some time now. As a lifelong farmer myself—I have been involved in dairy, beef, cash crop and many others—I can recall there being discussions on the need to provide direct funding to general farm organizations for over 20 years.

Of course the issue gained tremendous prominence in the late part of the 1980s and has now become the focal point on the agenda of many farm organizations. No

wonder. Stable funding potentially has stakes for everyone in the industry, because, as we know, agriculture is the second largest employer in this province.

Over the years there have been many extensive negotiations on the best way to administer and implement a method to fund farm organizations. I can well recall when one excellent proposal came close to fruition in 1989 and 1990 which allowed for voluntary participation. At that time, farmers would have been encouraged to register and thereby, being registered with the ministry, would have benefited from reduced application and processing delays for any ministry program they may have chosen to participate in. Unfortunately, the electoral winds changed and blew the option aside.

More recently, I find the latest attempt of the Minister of Agriculture and Food to be a vast improvement over the previous effort, the much opposed and frankly dictatorial Bill 105. In fact I was completely shocked when I learned about the details of the legislation that the minister introduced in the fall, particularly the provisions for charging farmers up to \$2,000 for not obliging with the ministry's paperwork. At that time, and even today, I charged that no real friend of farmers would ever think of imposing such a criminal penalty.

Even after the minister admitted that he was not aware of the fine provision and that he would remove it, I was still not totally relieved. Suspiciously, I worried what else would be slipped into the bill without the minister's attention. So it was with an overwhelming sense of caution that I reviewed the minister's latest version, now called Bill 42. While I am pleased that the more shocking provisions have been removed from Bill 42, I do not find the bill to be acceptable as it currently stands.

First, I share the concerns of many farmers that they are simply not being given a real choice in the matter. I still believe that a voluntary program is the way to go in this democratic and free-will society we all share. I believe that farmers would appreciate and benefit from a non-compulsory option.

As well, I find the bureaucracy behind the bill tedious, as it demands a lot of extra and unnecessary paper shuffling. I refer to the fact of course that the minister is still forcing all farmers to send a cheque, even though they may ask for a full refund at the same time. I presume that the minister, like the GFOs that stand to directly gain from the cheques, is hoping that farmers will simply forget to ask for their refund.

1820

To that, I will be seeking assurance that every accredited organization receiving funds must have appropriate insurance to ensure that they will always be in a financial position to make the refund to the farmers when requested.

As well, I must insist that the minister table information that is received from the registration process—in terms of all crop figures and not personalized farm incomes—as well as the costs. If ever the administrative costs exceed the fees taken in, then the program should be abandoned. After all, how could the minister possibly justify the cost of establishing more paperwork when other essential agricultural services are being cut, such as the field staff and the dairy inspectors and the closure of agricultural colleges?

I am also concerned about the inconsistent application of the \$150 registration fee towards annual membership to the organizations. I believe that farmers must gain something concrete from the process. Therefore, should a farmer choose to direct his money to a general farm organization, it should be worth one vote within that organization. I feel very strongly about that. After all, despite speculation that I have heard, I certainly hope that the registration process is not somewhat related to a unionized process. There are also fears that the information gathered on the registration forms may be used against farmers in some unforeseeable way.

These are some of the concerns, but all being said, I certainly believe that the stable funding process will benefit and I'm supportive. Someone has to take the blame for everything in this world, and I cannot help but say in my remarks that if this government would have got its act in place and got back here when it was supposed to have done, three weeks earlier, the problems in Bill 42 could have been ironed out and the bill probably could have been legislation by now.

On the positive side, I firmly believe that the process of gathering up-to-date information and statistics will assist farmers in planning coordinated food strategies, while at the same time allowing the minister to react and develop effective policies and programs.

I find in this day and age, with the communication and the accessibility we have, at a time when the Minister of Agriculture and Food continually talks about the agrifood industry becoming part of a new global economy, that he is not certain how much corn and beans are planted within this province. Most of us can find that information out with one phone call.

As well, I certainly hope that farmers will benefit from the education, research and policy advice that each of the accredited farm organizations will be able to produce upon receiving the funds. I am very proud of some of the programs in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Where we have agriculture in the classrooms, I'm very pleased about that.

Another thing that I think more members should take advantage of, being legislators, is the agricultural exchange. I think that many would benefit in that way. I'm very supportive and I will work towards that goal.

I have heard it said that the three major organizations

that stand to receive funds under the bill—the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario and the National Farmers Union—combined do not raise more than \$3.25 million. The stable funding registration fee will amount to more than double that. Of course, it is interesting and fair to note that of the estimated 65,000 farmers in the province, only about 20,000 have chosen to join general farm organizations. I do know that those general farm organizations, which I have been part of over the years, their membership and their executives work very hard to increase the numbers to have a strong voice, and I'm very supportive of that.

I maintain, as I always have, that if stable funding is to be implemented, it must be the will and the choice of the farmers, and it's our duty to discuss that with the agriculture community. At this point there certainly does not seem to be a clear, single voice on the issue.

For my part, I'm not a lawyer and I'm not able to determine with a fine-tooth comb every possible ramification and implication. I have, however, spent much time listening to the concerns and suggestions of farmers through this, combined with my own personal observations.

I will be recommending a number of amendments to Bill 42, and I encourage the Minister of Agriculture and Food to do the same. The minister must expand upon the advice he has received from all parties who stand to financially gain in this bill, and take the time now, before the bill goes any further, to go to the farmers of Ontario and explain and listen to their concerns as well. Only then may we build together an effective farm registration process and an effective farm organization funding process. We have to all work very hard to get the support of our second largest employers in this province and we have to work for that goal.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak on Bill 42, and I shall look forward to participating in the full hearings of the bill where all farmers can be heard, as well as resolving a number of questions that remain about the provisions of the regulations. Together I think for all parties the end result will be very rewarding and I will be pleased to participate in those hearings.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments, the honourable member for York North.

Mr Charles Beer (York North): I want to congratulate my colleague from Cornwall as well as my colleague from Northumberland for their remarks, and just stress one of the key points: the importance that this bill go to committee.

I understand there's been agreement and that it will go out for some two or three weeks to the resources committee where the various organizations are going to be able to come forward on the kinds of questions the

member for Cornwall had mentioned, and indeed the member for Chatham-Kent, and I gather perhaps some other members on the government side want to put some amendments to make the bill better.

I think it's important that one of the points that has been made is that as this has evolved, it has become a better bill, and what the members of my party have said to the minister is that it is by working together, by bringing forward amendments to make it stronger, to make it more representative of what the farm community wants.

I know in my own riding, where I have a good part of the Holland Marsh, which makes a significant contribution to agriculture in this province, there have been many discussions among the farmers in my area, concerns that they have about the bill, although I believe that on balance they support it, as do I.

But I think it is one of those bills where it will be very useful to have it in committee to be able to look at the detail of that bill and to make sure that in effect all the farm organizations, all the farmers and everyone can be satisfied that what we have done as legislators is to make sure that we have a bill that will help the family farm, that will provide the kind of stable funding that the family farm requires and that will be truly representative of the farming community.

I again want to congratulate the member on his speech and for his remarks, and we all look forward to the discussions in committee.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments, the honourable member for S-D-G & East Grenville.

Mr Villeneuve: I will not take the full two minutes. I simply want to congratulate my colleague and neighbour from Cornwall. We've worked together on a number of things, both when he was in power and now.

It's interesting. I was ready to move third reading. It would have been an interesting move. I gather that there's not much point in doing it now, but—

Mr Mammoliti: Do it anyway.

1830

Mr Villeneuve: I gather the farmer from York North has said that he has a number of amendments that he wants his party and his colleagues to bring. I have a few amendments that I think could assist. However, I have to remember always, we go back to Bill 48, when the Liberals brought in no amendments at all. We brought in 29, and none of them were accepted, so that was a little bit discouraging. I hope my colleagues from the Liberal Party have a little more luck than we had on the social contract in trying to amend a piece of legislation that needed to be amended very badly.

So again to my colleague from Cornwall, I look forward to working with him. It looks like it's going to go to committee. The farmer from York North said

three weeks. I think he's stretching it a lot. Maybe three days might be a little bit better, and I look forward to seeing the farmer from York North in that committee indeed if he wants to bring in a lot of amendments.

Mr Beer: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would just like to remind my friend the member for S-D-G & East Grenville that York county has a very strong federation of agriculture. As I noted, in the northern part of York county that I represent we provide to this province, and indeed throughout the country, both carrots and onions and it is a strong agricultural community—

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. That's not a point of order. I thank the honourable member.

Further questions and/or comments? If there are none, I recognize the honourable member for Cornwall. You have two minutes to respond.

Mr Cleary: I just want to thank my colleague from York North. I know that over the years he always has had a great interest in agriculture, because we talk from time to time. When he travels around the province, I know he's interested in what crops are growing and where. I do know one thing: He's said that he has an agricultural community in his own riding, and I know he's an expert on strawberries.

I also thank my colleague the member for S-D-G & East Grenville for his remarks. Also, I must say that I'm sure he will have some amendments, because I'm sure that some of the same people who talk to him have talked to me, and I hope that between all of us—there are the three parties—we can work out a bill that will serve the residents of this province for many, many years.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? If not, I would ask the honourable minister if has some concluding remarks.

Hon Mr Buchanan: Just very, very briefly, I'd like to tie up a couple of things that were mentioned. There were some concerns mentioned around the regulations, and indeed we have consulted and are meeting with the farm organizations so that we put the regulations in place to suit the needs of the farm organizations. That work has already started and will continue.

There was a mention of the voters' list. One of the concerns that's still out there on this bill and the previous bill was the concept of having a vote. The member for S-D-G & East Grenville mentioned the voters' list issue, which is an issue that I concur with him on, that we need to get a voters' list and any future time we want to have a vote it would be possible.

But we are consulting, and this bill has been put together, quite frankly, over the last almost three years. There's been a lot of consultation. There have been meetings virtually in every county around this province put on by some of the groups, mostly in favour and a

few groups have sponsored meetings in opposition, but basically there's been a lot of dialogue and a lot of acceptance. We have listened to what the concerns are and this is the bill that we've brought in to replace the previous bill, which had some flaws, in the minds of many people.

Just to conclude, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture had their directors' meeting this afternoon, and we have some people in the gallery: Dona Stewardson, who is the second vice-president with OFA; Geri Kamenz, who is the senior manager; Gavin Smuk, director, who is from Hamilton-Wentworth; and another gentleman, Carl Sulliman, who is the chief executive officer with the OFA.

I appreciate the work that the OFA membership has put into this, along with the NFU membership and the Christian Farmers Federation. This is a collaborative bill that's been brought together by work from the opposition and the farm groups. I appreciate all the support and constructive comments we've received over the last couple and a half years.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Buchanan has moved second reading of Bill 42. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion please say "aye."

Those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Mr Cleary: I ask that this bill be sent to the resources committee.

The Acting Speaker: I say to the minister, is resources committee agreed upon?

Hon Mr Buchanan: Yes, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: That is agreed.

Is there a business list for tomorrow?

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Yes. The business for tomorrow will be second reading of Bill 40, the Community Economic Development Act, and third reading of Bill 169, the public service amendments.

I would like to move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Mr Buchanan has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1837.

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Third Session, 35th Parliament

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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 22 July 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 22 juillet 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
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Thursday 22 July 1993

The House met at 1000.

Prayers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): On a point of order, I don't believe a quorum is present, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Could we have the Clerk check for a quorum?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present.

RECALL ELECTION REQUEST ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE DÉCLENCHEMENT
D'ÉLECTIONS PAR PÉTITION

Mr McClelland moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 59, An Act to provide for Petitions requiring the Premier to request the Calling of an Election / Loi exigeant que le premier ministre, sur pétition, demande que soit tenue une élection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The honourable member has 10 minutes for his opening remarks, after which every recognized party in the Legislature will have up to 15 minutes to participate and, finally, the honourable member for Brampton North will have two minutes in summation.

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): As I have had the pleasure and privilege of serving the people of Brampton North in this assembly over the past now close to six years, one of the things that has come up from time to time is the issue of parliamentary reform. As I travel both within my own constituency and indeed across the province and, quite frankly, from time to time across the country, people have reflected upon the need to move the parliamentary system into a mode that is more responsive to people, that has more reflection of the realities of the 1990s and indeed beyond into the next millennium as we face that in the not-too-distant future.

We have today leadership of various political parties who have espoused fundamental changes to our parliamentary system. The context of those initiatives are very much a product of people who operate in the everyday milieu of life in this province. One of the questions that frequently comes up as I travel—my friends opposite I know will get very, very excited about this; I can just imagine some of them going ballistic momentarily—is: “Is there no way to get rid of a government, with particular reference to the current

government, and how much longer do we have to put up with the government? When will the next election be?” People are literally praying for some mechanism to precipitate an election in this province.

I would suggest that has been the case throughout history, that from time to time governments come into disfavour, they fall out, and there's an ebb and flow in popularity. I look to my Conservative friends opposite and reflect back to post-1984 when the polls said there would be no possibility of a return of the then federal government, but what happened of course was there was a change and our former Prime Minister, the Honourable Brian Mulroney, returned with a major majority which essentially defied the polls of but a couple of years previous to that.

However, in that context, I think a lot of people are saying there is a sense of despair and a sense of frustration that has never been felt before in the province of Ontario. In the time that we have, I'm sure we'll be talking about some of the reasons for that.

As I said, one of the things that people say is: “Is there no way that we can compel the government to be responsive? Petitions don't work. Government members opposite laugh when we bring petitions to them. They say, ‘We agree with you but,’” and if anything evidenced that more than anything else, it was the recent debate on Bill 48. If you look down the list of people who sit on the government benches who had previous ties to the labour movement and the union movement, there was but a handful who had the courage of their convictions and the principles that they held, as many of them that brought them to this place, and stood by those principles. I pay tribute to them. That's a tough, tough thing to do. Some of us on this side have been in that position, and that's an awfully hard thing to do and my hat goes off to them. I give them full credit for having the courage of their convictions to stand by what they believed in and what they said and would not fall into the trap and the glib response that they hear from their leader, the Premier, who says: “Well, that was then and this is now. This is the reality of government and we can afford to be politically crass. We can abandon our principles, abandon the things that we believe in, abandon the promises we made. We'll just do whatever we please because, after all, we are in power and we will exercise that power with a view to our own benefit and not the benefit of the people of the province of Ontario. And furthermore, we will abandon those very people who supported us and got us here in the first place.”

1010

Loyalty is a very fleeting commodity, and the electorate requires and expects loyalty to them, constituency

by constituency, across this province. This bill provides a mechanism that is, in point of fact, relatively onerous for the people of any jurisdiction, for the people of the province of Ontario: to force an election. If you were to look at the provisions of the bill, it requires, in short, two thirds of the people of Ontario in a prescribed, controlled format with a registration-type requirement, to put their names on a petition compelling the Premier of the province to go to the Lieutenant Governor and ask for an election. Now, there are some other provisions in the bill, that it could not happen within a time frame of one year following any previous election.

You will know, Mr Speaker, as will my friends opposite and friends in the third party, that in the United States in recent history there have been situations where because of particular circumstances and things that are, quite frankly, untoward and very, very compelling, the population of a jurisdiction—by way of example, in the state of Nevada, I believe, a few years ago, there was such a groundswell of public opinion that they were able to secure a requisite number of signatures on a petition, file that, and compel the governor in that case to resign and call an election and put his mandate to the test of democracy through the people of the province.

Everywhere I go, everywhere, day by day, I get asked: "How much longer do we have to put up with this government? Is there no way to get rid of them?" A recall provision would take a tremendous amount of courage for all of us as elected members to proceed with, but bear in mind the requirements that would be imposed upon the people of the province. They would be required to have two thirds of the people signatory to a petition. None of us, I dare say—well, there may be some exceptions with some of the veteran members, but I doubt if anybody in the chamber presently sitting here, and I say this with all due respect to all of my colleagues, has ever secured two thirds of the vote.

In fact, I recall, after being elected for the first time in 1987, being, if you will, in the right place at the right time and enjoying good political fortune. Quite frankly, that was in large measure why I was elected with a substantial majority in 1987. It was no tribute to any particular qualities, I say in all honesty, that I brought to the people as a candidate. I hope I presented myself in an adequate fashion, and obviously there were a sufficient number of people who had confidence in my ability to represent them and do the job. But in point of fact, I was the beneficiary of, in political jargon, a "sweep-in." I was on the tide of a very popular, fresh government that came in in 1987 with a substantial majority.

Those of you who know the history of Brampton will understand that prior to my colleague Bob Callahan being elected in 1985 for Brampton South, the then riding of Brampton was served by the former Premier,

the Honourable Bill Davis, for a number of years. Some of the people who worked on his campaign, and indeed the former Premier himself, reflected upon the fact that over the course of time, very few of them in majority years had received even 50% of the population. I had the good pleasure of being elected for the first time with over 50% of the popular vote in my riding. That was substantial in a race with three major parties, with five candidates running. It was a happy accomplishment. I was happy to have those numbers, but those numbers in many respects are illusory. Most of us got elected by getting less than half of the votes. In fact, the government of the day was elected with 38% of the popular vote of the province of Ontario. I'm not a great mathematician, but that tells me that 62% of the people did not vote for the government.

In the provisions of this bill that I'm bringing forward to the House today for second reading, it would require even a greater number of people to not simply show up on election day and voice their displeasure, but to take a proactive step towards moving the dissolution of Parliament and forcing an election.

This bill responds to those two fundamental questions that people have: Is it not time to reform our parliamentary system so it becomes more responsive and more accountable, where people will be held truly to account for the promises that they made, for the representations that they made that got them elected in the first place and measure their walk with their talk, to say it's one thing to promise things and to come up with a people's agenda and it's another thing shortly thereafter being elected to abandon it virtually in total and to refigure and reconstitute our party platform and our position?

Things change, governments change, the realities of the world change. That's the world we live in. But there's a significant difference between change and fundamental abandonment of what a party said it stood for. Out of that has grown a despair and a despondency across this province that I believe has never been experienced before in this province, indeed this country.

That despair has led me, as I said, everywhere I go literally without exception. People ask me, "Is there no way we can get rid of this government?" This would provide an opportunity for this government and other governments to meet the test of accountability and responsiveness to the people of the province.

I would urge people to seriously consider this, because what you are doing when you're looking at this legislation is saying, "I'm prepared to measure my performance, to risk my performance against the test on an ongoing basis as well as the election," recognizing that it would require a significant proactive initiative by a vast number of people across the province to trigger the mechanism that is set forth in this legislation.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. All recognized parties in the Legislature now have up to 15 minutes to

participate in the debate on second reading of Bill 59.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I'm pleased to rise today and speak to Bill 59, the Recall Election Request Act, 1993, brought by my good friend the member for Brampton North, Mr McClelland.

I am going to vote with Mr McClelland on this particular bill. I want to put on record some of the potential difficulties that I have with it, but I recognize that this bill is put forward as an honest attempt to try to address some of the great concerns that exist in the electorate today, and I must say these are concerns which exist throughout Canada at both the federal and provincial levels. I dare say that any government anywhere in the world would be somewhat concerned about this bill, because it would realize that its own mortality was endangered by this kind of bill.

Governments today are having to make very difficult decisions, decisions which, in the normal turn of events, they would not like to make. I would start out by saying that I think it's a fair bet that this NDP, this socialist government that we have at the moment probably doesn't like at all the things it's having to do. In fact, I'm sure they don't like many of the things they're having to do.

These are very difficult circumstances which would challenge governments of all political stripes. Ultimately, difficult and unpalatable decisions have to be made, decisions which the electorate quite frankly doesn't like. But they still have to be made.

In considering a bill like this, you have to balance the fact that perhaps, if we make a bill so easy that we can sweep away a government which has been elected to a majority Parliament and is trying to do the difficult things that have to be done, even if you don't agree with it, it becomes unfair and we'll never be able to solve the very intractable problems we are faced with today.

Nevertheless, we are faced with a situation at the moment where the electorate is quite honestly coming to all members of the opposition parties and saying, "Can we not get rid of this government?" They are talking about it in terms of, "Can we not sanction them in some way that they would be forced to resign?" I have to reluctantly answer them: "No, there is no way we can force this government to resign. You can only wait for the general election."

But just to reflect on my own private member's bill, which I introduced last year, which was known as the Provincial Public Consultation Act, and I reintroduced it since the Legislature reconvened, because it died with the order papers when the government prorogued the last House, the objective of that bill was to make sure there was some outlet for people who were concerned. In fact the thrust of my private member's bill was to allow the electorate—if 15% of the eligible voters were

to sign a petition on the prescribed form, they would be able to force on to the next regularly scheduled provincial general election questions which were of concern to them.

1020

Also, the government of the day would have the right to put questions, I would suggest questions that probably would fit a lot better with the electorate than having to have the present government struggle with things like Sunday shopping and casino gambling, things which certainly this government did not run on and are now going in exactly the opposite direction to their main planks. If we look at auto insurance, they have made complete U-turns on their position.

Quite frankly, some of them might be right. I don't happen to agree with any of the things the government is doing, but that doesn't matter. I wasn't elected to the party that is governing. They are faced today with very difficult decisions where they feel that perhaps they were wrong.

We should not in opposition totally abhor the fact that governments change their minds. I think there is a certain lack of consistency with this government and a lack of intellectual honesty about the direction they're going, because they are actually turning back on their main platforms.

There's no doubt about it that in the last provincial election, I sat and listened to the NDP candidate in my own riding preaching to the fact that they were against Sunday shopping and that they were going to bring in a system of public auto insurance and a whole raft of other things that they haven't done. In fact they've done quite the opposite.

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): Tories wanted bang, bang, bang.

Mr Turnbull: Nevertheless—and I hear one of my friends across the floor beginning to heckle—I'm trying to reflect on the fact that I understand you have difficult decisions to make, but it obviously sits very badly with you, the fact that you are doubling back on all of your platform from An Agenda for People.

At the time of the last election, secretly I applauded you for the fact that you had the courage to put forward a document which is called in Britain a manifesto. I really do believe that all parties should put forward a manifesto at the beginning of each election, stating what they stand for. But quite frankly, it should be a better-researched document.

The amazing thing is now we have the government, when we talk about this, suggesting that they didn't read it when they went into the last election. That is a rather sobering thought for the people who voted for them, the fact that now we're having the members who got elected on this platform say, "Oh, I didn't read it, so therefore I'm not bound by it."

I think the day for party manifestos from all parties has come, but it has to be a much more intellectually honest document, and I think we have to accept that there will be particular items in these documents that, once you get into office, if you haven't been in office before, you're going to recognize you may have to make some changes to. But when you start absolutely prostituting the very values that you have stood for as a party, then the public have an entitlement to look to legislation such as the legislation which has been brought forward today, Bill 59.

The hurdle that Mr McClelland has put in his private member's bill is two thirds of those people who voted in the last general election. In the last election, in 1990, 64.4% of those eligible voted. Therefore, 42.9% of eligible voters would have to sign this petition to force a general election.

Coincidentally, the NDP received 37.8% of the eligible votes that were cast in the last general election. So in other words, you would have to get a number which was equivalent to all of the people who cast a vote for the Liberals and the Conservatives and then some of the people who cast votes for the NDP just to sign the ballot. Let's just think about that.

I have never, ever heard of a hurdle as high as that. In the United States, where they have had referenda legislation for many years in most states and which I reviewed for my own private member's legislation, the highest hurdle was that 15% of the eligible voters would have to sign a petition to force a question on to a referendum ballot. But we're talking about a number, if we look at the last general election, of 42.9%. This is a massive hurdle.

I have to say, despite all of the rumbling and dissatisfaction in the electorate, I frankly question whether you would be able to get that number to sign a ballot. Perhaps they may today because, indeed, not only has this government broken all of the promises it made in An Agenda for People, but it has also moved massively in a direction that it certainly didn't have as its platform. They have moved to essentially kill the private residential landlords.

I hear Mr Mills laughing about that. He thinks it's funny that he is a member of a government that is killing the private sector. And what is the effect of killing the private sector? The fact is, we now in this province have a more serious economic problem than any of the other provinces in Canada. We have the largest debt load of anything outside of sovereign nations in the world—not my words, these are the words of the Minister of Finance, lifted right out of his budget document.

That is a rather sobering thought, that we have taken this province, in those few short years since the Conservatives brought Canada prosperity through their labours in the Ontario Legislature—and we had a prosperous,

successful province. Now we have a province that has become, after sovereign nations, the largest debtor in the world bar none.

Mr Wood: Fifteen years of Tory spending, year after year.

Mr Turnbull: It's interesting. I hear Mr Wood from the NDP heckling that we were the big spender. It's very interesting that when we left office, we left, in my estimation, too large a debt. It was \$30 billion. Let's just concentrate on the numbers. The Liberals in just five years—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. Members will have the opportunity. The member for York Mills has the floor.

Mr Turnbull: The Conservatives, since Confederation, had achieved a debt level of \$30 billion. The Liberals, in the best five years this province has ever known, added \$10 billion in just five short years. One third of the debt since Confederation was added on again by the Liberals. But my big-spending friends across the floor are adding that amount of debt each and every year.

The Minister of Finance, when he was asked a question about his budget some year and a half ago, was spot on. He was so spot on that he was billions off the mark, increasing the debt. With all the foofaraw that comes from the government saying, "Oh, we should be getting more transfers from the federal government," the fact is—and these are irrefutable because these are provincial government numbers—that this provincial government has received more each year from the federal government in increases than the rate of inflation.

1030

Those are, unfortunately, the facts, my friends. You may not like them. This is very different to this provincial government which is actually cutting back the amount of money that it is giving to its transfer agencies. The fact is that this government has to make some very difficult choices and I am not trying to take away from it the right to make those difficult choices. These are difficult times and any political party that would be in office today would be having difficult times and, frankly, would be unpopular with the people. I give you that.

All I am suggesting is that it is reasonable, in view of the tremendous concern, the unease, about the political process that is abroad throughout the world, that perhaps we have to look at measures such as this which will provide a safety valve for the electorate, so that they can gain back confidence in the political system. Throughout the world they are having to do these things now.

The interesting thing, if you look at what is happening in Italy today, is that in Italy they have had for

many years a system of proportional representation and they have found that proportional representation is not working for them. It is establishing people. They are so entrenched in politics that they are there for a lifetime. So the Italian electorate are saying, "We want to get rid of proportional representation."

The interesting thing is that there's discussion in Britain at the moment where they have first-past-the-post system like we have here. People are beginning to say, "Maybe we need proportional representation." It is a reflection to a great extent of the fact that the electorate are fed up with the problems. They're very intractable problems and we have to allow the public to be a party to solving these problems.

So for this reason, I will be voting for my friend Mr McClelland's bill, and I recommend that the government at least consider the ability to let the electorate have their say.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): It's my pleasure to speak to this bill, having a great interest in opposing it. I listened very carefully to what Mr Turnbull has said, and apart from his rhetorical digressions and political hyperbole, he said some interesting remarks and stated earlier on some good points as to why he would oppose it, and continues by the very end, after all the other hyperbole, to support it. It's quite interesting to listen to political arguments because you can never really tell what people argue.

I also listened very attentively to the member for Brampton North, trying to understand the intent of his bill. He begins to talk about parliamentary reform, being responsive to the people and being accountable, and he says, "This is in no way intended to get rid of this government." Five minutes later, he says he listens to people saying, "How do we get rid of this government?" He comes up with a bill that is designed to do just that, so he contradicts his intent, I believe. He might want to clarify that as he speaks later on in his two-minute rebuttal.

Within our system, petitions are only meant to express an opinion, not to bring down a government. The member speaks about petitions and says, of course, that these petitions are inadequate, that expressing your opinion contrary to what a government is doing is simply not enough, that what we need to do is to propose a bill that can dissolve this government, and how do we proactively do that? That's the real intent, not parliamentary reform, not making it responsive to the people, not making it more accountable, because we do have a mechanism in this parliamentary system that makes us accountable. I have no problems with the system as it currently exists to make individuals like himself and all of us accountable.

If the bill were proposed in such a way that it would build cultural development, political development, that it would make people more politically active in the

political process, as opposed to signing a petition that says, "We don't like this government; we want you to call an election," if we had done something different that speaks to that political development, I could support it. But nothing in this bill speaks to that.

Petitions do not politicize the public. Petitions do not involve the public in a way that they would understand either the difficulties or the profundities of a particular issue, or all of the issues that we face as a government. They do not do that. That is not the intent of what the member's trying to do.

The intent clearly is that he wants to bring down the government. What it says to me is that this particular Liberal is so unhappy being out of government that he wants to find a way to get back in, in a hurry. They have not accepted the fact that the NDP is in power and that we're governing and that we're making tough decisions. He doesn't like it. The Liberals don't like being out of power and they want to get back in. That's the real intent.

But he doesn't want to speak to that. He alludes to a number of people to whom he speaks who say, "How do we dissolve this government and what mechanism can we put into place to do this quickly?" That's the rhetoric this member brings.

The concern expressed by supporters he speaks of, that Canadians have few opportunities to hold their MPPs accountable is dubious when assessed against Canada's recent electoral history. I read here:

"Since 1945, Canadians have gone to the polls in 15 general elections. The results have created nine majority and six minority governments. Only twice have governments been re-elected to two consecutive majorities. From 1945 to 1988, the average term of Parliament was 3.1 years. Compared with the US, there is a high legislative turnover in Canada."

That's the fact. There is a high legislative turnover. We are accountable to the public. We're seeing that across Canada, nationally and provincially. When people do not like what governments do, they express it in their vote, and in the meantime they allow us the freedom, as governments, to govern and to make tough decisions.

We've made some good decisions on many different issues that neither this party, the Liberal Party, nor the Conservative Party, would never do. We speak about our record on labour rights, which the member spoke against. We talk about a workers' protection fund to help people who have been laid off work when companies go bankrupt, and an investment employee ownership program to increase workers' ownership of private industry. We've increased the minimum wage. We're investing more than any other government in the country in job training and job creation, and we're opposing free trade, very definitely.

We have done some great things that are of interest

to the majority of Ontarians in this province. We have done employment equity in a way that they do not like on the opposite side. We have moved on pay equity in a way that the other governments would not have moved, as we have. We have done things that these other parties would never do. They don't like it, so this member proposes a bill that would have the effect of bringing down the government.

Decisions that are arrived at within an environment seething with emotion, as he proposes, is not an environment marked by calm and collected debate. What we want is reasoned debate that lasts over a period of time, and not to allow a political party, in this case the Liberal Party, or the Conservative Party, to be able to force a vote through a petition to undo the things a government should do.

I oppose this not because I'm in government right now, because if the Liberals were in government I would say that they have a right to govern. I would oppose their views, and I will do that for as long as it takes and will wait for an election, but every government, every party, if in power, needs to be able to govern to do that.

This is a bad bill, it's a nonsensical bill, it doesn't give us genuine parliamentary reform, it doesn't build political development or political culture in this country, and as such we need to oppose it.

1040

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): I rise today during private members' hour to discuss Bill 59, which has been put forward by my colleague Mr McClelland from Brampton North. I believe the reason this bill is before us is because what Mr McClelland is hearing, what I'm hearing and I think what most members of this Legislature, particularly those on the opposition side but I suspect those in the government caucus as well, from their constituents is, "How soon can we have the next election?"

People in Ontario today are feeling cynical, they're feeling frustrated, they're feeling a sense of despair, they're feeling anger and anguish and alienation, and one of the reasons they're feeling that way is their sense that there's nothing they can do to influence the government.

In the summer of 1990, in the wake of a very real and legitimate process within our democracy, the people of Ontario made a decision. They voted for a party that had put forward their Agenda for People. They thought they knew who they were voting for, and frankly they're feeling a tremendous sense of betrayal.

We've seen Ontario suffer through a recession, through difficult economic times in a way which many of us never could have contemplated or anticipated because of our belief that Ontario was fundamentally strong. Because we had outperformed our neighbours

during buoyant and good economic times, many of us felt we would outperform our neighbours in difficult economic times, and yet we know that Ontario's performance has not been as good as that of her neighbours. Ontario's performance has been worse because of the policies of this NDP government.

What I hear time and time again from my constituents is: "Isn't there anything you can do, Elinor, to cause an election? Isn't there anything you can do, Elinor, to see that we have an opportunity to influence this government in a way which will stop it from doing the damaging and dangerous things that it never talked to us about during the election?"

What Bill 59 does is put forward a mechanism which is not available today in Ontario. It is a remedy when the normal democratic safeguards don't work. Normally, you will have a caucus revolt if you have a government attempting to do things that its caucus does not support. But unfortunately, you have a caucus of NDP members who are so afraid of losing their jobs and having to face the people that they are like sheep following along in the wake of the disastrous policies of this government and not taking the strong and important role of defending the public interest and attempting to influence their own government.

The opposition has done what we can do to be both effective and responsible. We have stayed here in this House. It's now the end of July 1992. We have insisted on debating legislation—

Hon Fred Wilson (Minister without Portfolio and Chief Government Whip): It's 1993.

Mrs Caplan: It's 1993, and I thank the minister. It is July 1993, and we are here in this House working, debating the legislation. We refused to allow the government to ram its agenda through without debate. They had anticipated that if they said the House was going to sit here at times when people thought we would all be on holidays or doing our committee work, they could just get the acquiescence of the opposition, and we've refused to do that.

We have used every parliamentary tool that is available to influence the government to make sure that its policies will reflect the public interest. We've used every democratic rule that we can to attempt to defeat this government. We have encouraged and supported its caucus members to speak out and to try to influence, within the government caucus, the important changes so necessary to recovery and job creation in Ontario.

Bill 59 is a remedy which is not available today, and that is the ability to recall the government. One of the ways to restore confidence in the province of Ontario, to say to those people who are cynical and alienated and despondent and angry and frustrated, what we can say to them is that by support of Bill 59 we can give you a remedy not only for this government, but for future

governments so that you can take action to cause an election before the Premier decides that he wants to go to the polls.

It's a sad day that I stand here to say that our democracy is not working well enough if people are feeling so alienated and so cynical, and it's with a sad heart that I support a recall provision as proposed in Bill 59, but I do support it.

Mr David Wininger (London South): I'm pleased to rise and join in this debate today. I won't pass any judgement on the constitutionality of this bill, which may indeed be suspect, and I won't advert to clause 3(1)(c), which I find very obnoxious in that the petition could contain names of only those people who voted in the last election. So all of those people who may object to the holding of another election prematurely would not have a vehicle by which to register their opposition to that petition.

I find it quite peculiar that the member for Brampton North, who was just a few moments ago reflecting on his election in 1987 and his years of office in the Legislature since that time, did not bring forward this legislation back in 1987, 1988 or 1989, because I put it to you that we had in Ontario, between 1987 and 1990, the most bloated, arrogant, complacent and do-nothing government this province has ever seen. If there was ever a need for this kind of legislation, the member for Brampton North should have brought it forward at that time.

I believe this legislation is of a fraudulent nature in that it attacks the results of the democratic vote. It's an attack on representational democracy as it has evolved since the times of the ancient city-states in Greece, when direct democracy ruled. It's like saying, "I like baseball, but I'm losing the game, and because I'm losing the game, I'm gonna change the rules, or we're going to abolish baseball." I mean, it's that kind of attitude, which, as my colleague says, is certainly a pernicious one.

We all agree there should be more accountability in the parliamentary process. We all agree that, especially in this political climate, people need to be heard and need to know that they're being heard. However, at election time, we trust the good voters of this province to choose representatives to judge, to reflect, to deliberate, to compromise, to lead and respond to their concerns. People accept the need for responsible governance. We respect the voters' ability to choose responsible representatives.

The existing recall provisions in the US have been seldom used and in fact don't extend to senators, congressmen, the executive council and the President. Individual states have recall mechanisms; they too are seldom used. In fact, one expert on the subject matter of recall in the United States concluded recently that the recall device has not significantly improved direct

communication between leaders and the led; neither has it produced better-qualified office holders or noticeably enriched the quality of citizenship or democracy in those places permitting it.

We, as elected members of this House, when in government, walk a fine line between advancing the greater good, as a collectivity of members, for the people of the province, versus responding to the needs and aspirations of the people in our own local communities. We can't be held hostage in our decision-making by the threat looming over us each and every day of petitions being circulated around the province, often fuelled by large, powerful lobby groups with considerable resources and money.

It's interesting that Joseph Zimmerman observed that because these weapons of direct democracy have been employed by fiscally conservative groups—the weapons of course, he says, are available to all groups, and successful use of the weapons by one group is an inadequate ground for their abolition. Interestingly, he says, these devices originally were advocated and employed by liberal reformers, such as the member for Brampton North.

In conclusion, because I know my colleague behind me wishes to have a little time left as well, I would say that this particular legislation has to be opposed by all those who have a firm commitment to democracy, because what it suggests is that a validly held electoral vote under existing rules, providing for a fixed mandate for a majority government, can no longer apply simply because Liberal members happen to be out of government.

1050

The Acting Speaker: Further debate on the second reading of Bill 59? Members from the government side still have two minutes.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Just very briefly, I read this bill, and if this bill at all empowered people, I'd support it; if it increased people's representation in this place in any way, I would support it. I'm one who does not believe that a majority government should be won with 38% of the vote, nor 42%, nor 45%, nor 49%. I believe it should be won with 51% of the vote, because that's how people have a voice in this place.

The member says, "Well, let's conduct a petition." What that would suggest to me is that government should be delivered on the basis of polls. You take some money, you pay for a poll, you find out what's popular with people and what people want and that's what you do. That doesn't make government right or honest or truthful with people, because it's simple to ask the question: "People, do you want a higher deficit?" No. "Do you want increased services?" Yes. "Do you want to pay more in taxes?" No. "Do you want less government?" Yes. "Do you want faster services?" Yes.

Let's do that, let's poll everybody in Ontario. Let's ask them what's popular and what they would like and then let's be dishonest and try to deliver. That's what this says: Let's be dishonest and try to deliver. The Liberals governed during the 1980s and their popularity level was always over 50%. They did nothing. Nobody would have undertaken a petition to boot them out; nobody would have done that. But in 1990, when they issued the writ, what did the people of Ontario say? "We've had enough of you."

People want tough decisions. They want the truth. They want you to govern in the best way you can and not by polls.

The Acting Speaker: The member's time has elapsed. Further debate on second reading of Bill 59?

Mr McClelland: I want at the outset to commend the member for London South who obviously did a little bit of research, took a look at some literature and some academic review of some similar legislation in the United States and drew, I believe, an opinion that was based on his assessment of the data and literature available. I want to commend him for that and pay tribute to the fact that he took time to do some work on behalf of the people he represents.

It seems to me that my friend from Downsview particularly summed it up very, very well. He talked about what happens in elections, the ebb and flow of popularity. Herein lies the issue and the pivotal point. This has nothing to do with being in power or out of power, I say with respect to my friend the member for Fort York and the member for London South. This would apply to any government of any political stripe. Therein lies the issue and the essence of what we're talking about. It is not a matter of current popularity. This requires a fairly onerous task undertaken by the general population to do something that is not simple and straightforward, as the member for York Mills alluded to, taking in parallel with that his I think very thoughtful Bill 16, Mr Turnbull's Provincial Public Consultation Act which requires people to take initiative.

This is not a matter of people responding at election time in response to six weeks of campaigning and people presenting their message; if you will, people having the ultimate poll in terms of parliamentary democracy. This is an opportunity for people who are so frustrated, so angry and so upset that they are desperate for some way to respond and make their feelings known to the government, a government that has betrayed them and betrayed its supporters consistently since the time it was elected.

The member for Oriole makes a very, very good point. The member for Oriole says that the real recall provision should be caucus. It should be caucus, based on women and men who have the courage and the convictions to stand by their principles and to say to

their leadership: "No, we will not allow you to push us around and tell us what to do, when we know that the people who got us here don't want us to do that. Our supporters are opposed to what you're doing and the population generally across this province is sick and tired of the way you have been mismanaging and mishandling the government and putting it over on the people. We will not put up with it any more. Get your own house in order," a caucus would say to its leadership. That would be the appropriate recall provision in a parliamentary democracy, but sadly and unhappily, that's lacking at the present time.

This has nothing to do with which party is in power. It has to do with the mechanism to provide people with the opportunity to respond to the concerns they have.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The member for Downsview is out of order; he's out of his seat. Please allow the member for Brampton North the time to participate in the debate.

Mr McClelland: I looked, as the Minister of Finance would say, in one of the local tabloids yesterday. It had an editorial, and the concluding comment was, "How do you like socialism so far?" It's a question I've seen on billboards, a question I've heard asked tongue-in-cheek and rhetorically by countless people all across the province.

It's really quite amazing to look at the sources of despondency. They are people you would have thought would be true right to the end. I was almost going to say true blue, but of course that would be a misnomer—but true right to the end with their NDP friends. They are absolutely outraged at some of the things that are happening.

They applaud people like the member for Welland-Thorold, who says, "I'm going to stick up for what we said we were going to do." I don't happen to agree with the position on public auto insurance. I think it's absurd and ludicrous. We'll talk about that some other time, I'm sure, because they'll be back again trying to undo the damage they did with Bill 64. At least the member for Welland-Thorold said: "We had a position and we went to the people five times on it. Then when we got elected, what did we do? We abandoned that position."

Consider Bill 48 and the abandonment. We have the minister standing up and saying they're almost in tears, in fact basically crying in their seats, when they get up and vote for it; none the less, they don't have the courage of their convictions but for one minister, who said, "I'm going to stand by what I believe in and I'm going to vote my conscience and vote for the people who brought me here and the people I represent."

Day care: They are the people who say ideologically, "I want to wipe out day care," in the region of Peel right now putting home day care in jeopardy for people

who really need it, people with special-needs kids, and that's because they're bound to this ideological conviction that there's something wrong with profit, that it's a dirty word.

I met somebody on Monday night who had no idea what I did, a gentleman who lived in Ontario for many years and is now operating a business in Hong Kong. He said to me, and I quote: "There's no way I will put another nickel into this province until we get rid of the Commie government. I'm better off investing in China, where I'm investing." Those were his words. He had no idea of the business I was in at the current time. That's indicative of the kinds of things I hear everywhere I go.

A local bartender, a gentleman who runs a pub and a bar, a strong supporter in Brampton of the New Democrats, still remains on the executive, says, "I wish there was some way we could get rid of the leadership and get the NDP back to what it used to be and why I committed myself to this party." He said to me, "McClelland, I'll do everything I can to defeat you in the next election, but I want to do it on the basis of an New Democratic Party that is truly a New Democratic Party."

Medical laboratories, efficiency, cost efficiency—

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): Profit.

Mr McClelland: And profit. Isn't that a terrible thing, I say to Mr Mills. "Profit": What a dirty word. Profit only drives the economy of this province, it only drives the opportunities that existed for you, sir, that brought you to immigrate to this country and this province and build a good life for yourself, and now you say "profit" is a dirty word.

The folly of the socialist ideological idiocy is: "We can make the experiment work in Ontario when it's failed everywhere else in the world. We'll drive people away, we'll drive investment away."

I say to the member for York Mills that I have a seven-year-old son and I fear for the future of him and kids like him in this province, because it will take decades to undo the nonsense that you have perpetrated on the people of this province.

1100

You don't care about long-term care and the efficiencies that are available there, medical laboratories, because profit—my God, profit has only worked and built one of the highest standards of living in the world for our province. It has drawn people, ironically, from other parts of the world, like yourself, sir, to come here, and then you throw it away with some ideological dismiss.

Casino gambling has just totally gone contrary to every position from the now Minister of Natural Resources, the former Attorney General, things that the Premier had said himself, and what do we have? We have one member who has the courage of his convic-

tions to stand up and say, "I'm not going to put up with that." I'm not here to debate casino gambling; we'll have ample time to do that, I suppose, in the next week or two. The point is, again, another reversal. People are upset about that. They're angry.

Playing games with numbers and saying we're going to set up crown corporations is not really part of the deficit, playing games with the social contract and saying, "You're in, you're not in; \$30,000 if you're under, but you're not under, and we'll change those roles and we're refer to the niceties of the act to manoeuvre things to our advantage."

Young physicians who have invested years of their life, women and men who have prepared to practise medicine in this province and whom the taxpayers have invested in, saying, "We're going to go to the job lottery at the Royal York Hotel and get out of this province because we're not welcome here and there's no future."

Budgets start out with a government that says, "First of all, we're going to spend our way out of the deficit." Then the next budget says, "We're going to balance it, a little bit of spend, a little bit of cut and slash." Then the next budget says, "A little bit of slash," a constant moving target.

The Waste Management Act says, "We will abandon all the principles that we ever had," and, ironically, try to go with the environment assessment reforms, at the same time throwing out that very process available to the people of Ontario.

You wonder why there's cynicism. It's not a matter of the ebb and flow of popularity, as my friend from Downsview says. Governments rise and they fall; I alluded to that in my earlier comments. The former Prime Minister was at an all-time low. He had an opportunity to go to the people, and the people, over the course of a campaign, came up with a decision and re-elected him with a majority.

This is an extraordinary remedy for extraordinary times and the extraordinary despondency that exists now in the province of Ontario. I can tell you, when I walk around my community, whether it be the emergency services at Peel Memorial Hospital that are in jeopardy at the current time, people are concerned. They want to make sure that they have it there, and they're concerned about the future of their children and the safety of their families. I look at what happened with the development in my community, the Chinguacousy health care facility, ready to go, on the verge of being delivered, and pulled at the last minute by a government that now refuses to consider it. Notwithstanding their philosophical commitment to community health, community care, they're going to pull that one.

Look at day care, at the hundreds of women, primarily single women but some single men, who are depend-

ing on in-home child care that is at jeopardy and is being cancelled because of the impact of the social contract by this NDP government.

Think of long-term care, people who are getting bills now, and moms and dads who have made a family decision and are have been denied the option of going to the marketplace and looking at private sector care for them, because again, my friend from York Mills would say, "Profit, what a terrible thing," profit that has built one of the best places. We have essentially a sound infrastructure. It needs some work. We have essentially a sound educational system, but the point of fact is—

Mr Perruzza: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I've listened to the member all morning and he hasn't said once how this bill would empower people any more than they're empowered now.

The Acting Speaker: It's not a point of order; it's a point of view.

Mr McClelland: In conclusion, as my friend has very cleverly taken off the last few seconds of my last minute, let me say this to the member for Downsview: The opportunity for people is this, the empowerment to people is this: When there is such despondency and despair and an absolute total lack of confidence, as there is, in the mismanagement and incompetence of the government of the day, it would provide people with an opportunity. If they were to overcome some relatively onerous provisions of the act to initiate a process that would give them an opportunity—and people want that opportunity today. Everywhere I go, everyone I speak to says, "Is there no way we can get rid of this disastrous government," and this bill would provide them with an opportunity to have a remedy.

The Acting Speaker: This completes the time allotted for the second reading of Bill 59. We will deal further with this bill at 12 o'clock.

ELECTION AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI ÉLECTORALE

Mr David Johnson moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 60, An Act to amend the Election Act / Loi modifiant la Loi électorale.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The honourable member for Don Mills will have 10 minutes, after which every recognized party in the Legislature will have 15 minutes to debate. The honourable member for Don Mills will then have two minutes in response.

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): I don't think this matter may be as contentious as the previous one. Indeed, this private member's bill is a straightforward, simple amendment that I think we can all endorse. It simply extends the categories of those who can get a proxy vote during a provincial election to include the elderly, the disabled and those who are away on vacation.

It also extends the period of time during which a person can get a proxy vote. At present, bona fide electors who are qualified to receive a proxy vote can do so up until the day in advance of polling day, but on election day itself you cannot get a proxy vote. This bill would address that situation and would permit bona fide electors to receive a proxy vote on election day itself.

I think we would all agree that the most fundamental, the most basic, the most important right that we enjoy in our society here in the province of Ontario and here in Canada is the right to vote. Indeed, many Canadian citizens have fought, have served in the First World War, the Second World War and in Korea for this kind of right.

I have had the honour and the privilege to be a member of Branch 10, the Todmorden branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. Through my association with the legion members, I know not only of the suffering, the sacrifice and the hardships that took place during those wars, but I know of the great pride of the men and women who served and that they fought for the rights and the freedoms that we enjoy here within our country today: the rights and the freedoms of free speech, of worship and of course to vote and to select and choose a government that will set the policies and the decisions for the future of our country. Through this voting process we are shaping our own future, and it's very important that we all be able to participate in this procedure.

It's ironic as well that many of the same people who value the right to vote, value the right to participate and indeed consider it beyond a right, consider it an obligation and feel that in fact they are not being a good citizen if they don't vote, are the ones who have the greatest difficulty or the greatest restrictions in terms of actually being able to get out and to vote. I'm speaking specifically of the elderly, the frail and the disabled.

I also wanted to note that after each election, the chief election officer prepares a report, and I have a copy of two of those most recent reports in my hand here at the present time. I have a copy of a report dated 1988 and a copy of a report dated 1991 from the chief election officer. In both of these reports, the CEO has reported on the proxy voting system and he has made recommendations through these reports with regard to the general election procedures, but specifically with regard to proxy voting.

1110

I suppose we all know, but perhaps for the benefit of anybody who may be watching, proxy voting is the right of a bona fide elector who is not able to vote on election day to get someone else, another bona fide elector, to vote in that person's place. The Election Act does permit a number of different categories of proxy voting, even at the present time.

It still excludes some people but it does permit, for

example, Canadian Forces members or their spouses or their families—those who are bona fide electors—to receive a proxy vote. If they're not able to be present, somebody else can vote in their stead. It permits those people employed in the business of long-distance travel, either by air or water or rail or motor vehicle, to vote by proxy. It permits people who are away on business to vote by proxy. It doesn't permit their spouses or their children, but the people themselves are able to vote by proxy.

It permits people who have medical problems to vote by proxy, although I'm not sure if the interpretation of "medical reasons" is uniform across the province of Ontario, but at least there is that category. It permits students who are away at registered institutes to vote by proxy. It permits people in job training or retraining to vote by proxy. The interesting category—and I'll come back to this a bit later, either in my remaining four minutes or in the subsequent 15 minutes—is it permits people who are inmates in penal institutes or correctional institutes to vote by proxy.

Now, coming back to the chief electoral officer, I'm going to quote from his most recent report. He's indicated that "eligible electors who are unable to vote solely because no administrative mechanism has been devised to accommodate them are as effectively disenfranchised as persons to whom the legal right is denied." Basically what he's saying is, if you're an eligible voter, and because you're away or because of some physical restriction you are unable to get out and vote, then you have been denied that right to vote. In our society, that is not acceptable.

The chief election officer goes on to say, "The democratic principles interpreted in the spirit of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms support the elimination of administrative disenfranchisement where reasonably possible." Again, what he's saying here is, in a modern society we should do all we can to assist people to participate in the most important aspect of our society: to form government and determine how government is created. I believe my amendment is in that spirit.

I might say that, having talked with the chief election officer, he fully supports what I'm putting forward. In fact, he recommended that section 17 of the act be amended to grant the right to vote by proxy to any elector with reason to believe that he or she will be unable to vote, both at the advance poll and at his or her regular polling place on election day. So the chief election officer is saying: "Throw out all the different categories. You shouldn't have to justify it on medical reasons. You shouldn't have to justify it because you're in the armed forces or any other specific reason. There should be any bona fide, valid reason whatsoever that you can't attend on voting day, you can't attend at the advance polls, and you should be able to get a proxy."

This recommendation, I might say, has been before

this Legislature for some time but, I guess, in terms of priorities, it hasn't come to the top and it hasn't been implemented. My amendment doesn't quite go that far but it certainly does broaden the number of categories.

Inevitably, there are seniors and there are disabled people who will earnestly wish to vote but who, on election day, for whatever reason—reasons of health, physical limitations, extremely bad weather—will simply not be able to get out and vote.

In my municipality of East York—I might say that I represented it until I came to this House—over 16% of the population are 65 or over. This is Ontario of the future. In East York perhaps there is the highest proportion of senior citizens of any municipality in Ontario, but this will happen in all our municipalities as the years go by. We have an aging population and more and more we are going to have higher proportions of elderly people.

My 10 minutes are coming to an end. I'm simply going to say at this point, although I'll be commenting later, that our society is changing. There are needs of the elderly that need to be accommodated. I think this is one small step, this proxy vote for the elderly, that could be accommodated and I'll speak further to it later on in this period.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): I am very proud to be able to participate in the debate of the private member's bill introduced by the member for Don Mills. I listened carefully to the points he raised, and I think he has some very valid points and concerns to ensure that we respect the rights of people to be able to vote, for example, people who are disabled or seniors. I believe he is very well intentioned to make sure that people have access to that vote, and it's an important point that he raises.

But I do have a problem with this private member's bill. When we really look at the bill, I think in the current situation it does not prevent people who are disabled or who are seniors from voting, so I think I'd like to clarify a couple of points.

I think the bill seems to give the right to people who are seniors or who are disabled that does not exist, but there is one line in the present act that enables people to have a proxy vote for people who for medical reasons are unable physically to go to polling places. That is 17(1)(d).

The elderly or disabled who cannot get around to go shopping or to movies or to visit relatives are already provided with the ability to vote by proxy, and now most polling places are accessible. However, if the polling place is not accessible, the same section of the act then enables the voter to deal with the inaccessible polling station by the opportunity of proxy vote.

From my own experience within the riding of York

East, I think most places are accessible. I have seen many seniors and many persons with disabilities who have been able to go out to the polling stations, and I think they have really made the places accessible.

I believe there are perhaps some areas across the province, in rural areas or other places, that may not have accessibility because of transportation or because of the building where the polling station is located, but I think the act then still permits people to vote by proxy.

Another point to make: I think the only group that really will be added to the list of those who are entitled to vote by proxy are people who are away because of personal travel plans, and I have a little bit of difficulty with that because we do have advance polls before election day, so that provides the opportunity for people to vote at them.

But if we're thinking in general, if we open up this process, I think the current act provides for proxy on any day, including the immediate day preceding polling day, then the polling day will be extended to include election day. I think what could result is that there would be additional administrative complexities at the polling station and it could increase the potential of fraud. That point is one that really concerns me.

1120

As you know, there was the recent federal report released by the Conservative government and in the report—I have the report here and I would just like to quote from it—it's the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, the Lortie commission. It recommends that the proxy vote be abolished, and the recommendation is 2.2.5(e), and it says, "Voting by special ballot." I think that's a recommendation that they make and this would be to reduce the potential of fraud: "A special process should be developed, one that can be administered well."

Clearly, the Election Act wants to ensure that people who are disabled or who are seniors have polling places that are accessible. I think we're looking at people who have disabilities who cannot get to the polling station for whatever reason. Because of illness or disability it is impossible for them to go to a polling station. Under clause 17(1)(d) we do permit them to vote by proxy. For example, it's talking about deaf people, people who are in wheelchairs.

We're talking about the number of people who have disabilities, they have the ability to go to polling stations to vote, they are able to do that. So then why would we permit people with disabilities to be given the special treatment who can take advantage of the system in this way? We want the system to be fair. I think we have to maintain that question of fairness and the question of people having the same treatment.

We understand and recognize that people who are

disabled or seniors who are very vulnerable or who are very ill and it's impossible for them to get out—the act already permits them to have a medical certificate or they register with the election officer and then they are sensitive to the needs of those people and they are allowed to vote.

But I'm concerned that if we look at people specifically, because of their personal travel plans, who have difficulty—but we do already take that into consideration by having the advance polls. I think we have to look at the administration of the voting, we have to look at the procedures, and if it becomes very complex or very open, we are leaving ourselves open to fraud.

Just to wrap up, I strongly believe that the member for Don Mills has very good intentions in the bill, a very caring person, to make sure that people with disabilities and seniors and other people do have access to use their right to vote. I think the intention is right and I support the intention or the principle, but I think the problem is with a very specific line where it's permitting persons who have personal travel plans to keep it a little bit open. I think the current Election Act does not prevent people from having the opportunity because of illness or medical reasons; it does not prevent them from voting by proxy. I think the current act is very clear that it does not prevent people from this.

I wish to congratulate the member for Don Mills for the good intention behind the bill, but this is a point that I raise in the debate on this concern and I would be interested to hear the other members, and the member for Don Mills, convince me, if he perhaps could give some very specific, valid examples, so that I may be able to then reconsider my position.

I look forward to hearing more in the debate and I encourage the other members of government to listen to the points that are raised. I think perhaps we need a little more convincing on how people could benefit from this.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate on second reading of Bill 60. The honourable member for Brant-Haldimand.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I'm certainly pleased to be able to stand in support of the bill presented by the member for Don Mills because I think it's very important. It's very important to encourage people to vote in all elections in the wonderful democracy that we have in this land.

I was pleased also to hear from the member for York East about the elections review commission and the proposals they are making, a special ballot. But the problem is, when will that be completed? When will action be taken on it? So it's an unknown length of time until the problems, as I see them, as responded to by this bill, will be faced and indeed solved.

While many citizens don't agree that we have a true democracy, and that's because of the restrictions, rules and regulations placed upon them by all levels of government, we certainly do have a democratic form of government where people can be nominated, can run for office, and some be elected. So those are important procedures, and in the election procedure it is important to include all and make possible access to all regardless of personal problems and disabilities.

Of course, once people are elected, we should take the opportunity to report back to our constituents on an ongoing basis and indeed be responsible to the constituency for some of the things that we stand for after being elected, as well as saying what we're going to stand for previously. That almost refers back to the previous bill, which I did not have an opportunity to speak to but certainly support and will be voting for.

This bill will provide additional access to the election process for many people, and that indeed is very important. Millions of dollars are spent by candidates, riding associations and governments to encourage people to vote, but the turnout is often very disappointing. In many cases people cannot go to the polls on election day; indeed cannot vote in the advance poll.

I found this out particularly in the by-election held March 5, 1992, in the riding of Brant-Haldimand, where many people were—they weren't so upset that they couldn't vote for me; they were more upset at the fact that they wouldn't be able to vote in the election, and it was because of precommitted travel plans and various other things. So I think it behooves us to encourage eligible voters to vote in elections as much as possible.

On the rare occasion, as a locally elected municipal official, when I was confronted with statements by citizens that they didn't vote for me and probably wouldn't, but they didn't vote for me and that many others hadn't either—in other words, I did not represent all the people—I had to admit, and did on many occasions, that indeed I was elected by the majority of the minority of citizens who took the opportunity to vote. Wouldn't it be a real accomplishment in our society if indeed candidates were elected by the majority of the voters eligible to vote? That would be certainly an improvement.

Now, there is a Municipal Elections Act, of course, governing municipal elections, and it's interesting to note that proxy voting is much less restrictive there. I hasten to add that there are problems with that particular act that are being addressed by the Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, as I understand it, at the present time, and so some changes will be coming forth. I realize the importance of wanting to provide proxy voting but also having it protected, that such a system cannot be abused. That's very important. So I think we'll see some change to that.

I recall that when I went to public school many years ago, we were required to take a course called civics. Civics was a course where we learned about the operation, responsibility and services of our federal government, of our provincial government and of our municipal governments. It was intensive, and of course the result of that course was to try to instil in every student the wonderful future opportunity to be able to vote for candidates of our choice to represent us in the various levels of government. I think that's very important, and I understand there are some moves to go back to teaching those very important things. I hope that indeed is being pursued, because it's important in my view.

1130

Indeed, many of the people who are unable to vote at the present time, and would be able to vote through the proxy system recommended by this bill, consider voting not only a right but an obligation. There are many people who feel very strongly about that. So I say let this House facilitate additional access to elections for the elderly, ill, disabled and those who have pre-committed travel plans, because that does happen for various reasons and they are not able to vote.

There are many other problems of course with elections and with the election procedures and ridings. One of the very confusing things I find in Ontario is when you talk to people about the riding in which they're situated. It's a very complicated system. In the provincial riding of Brant-Haldimand, parts of the riding are in four different federal ridings and three upper-tier governments plus two first nations governments. It is quite confusing. One riding goes east and west, another will go north and south and criss-cross. I think that's something that in the future we should be looking at in some way too.

I realize that's a big job, a task that would involve maybe changing the population bases for ridings, but it's particularly troublesome in rural areas because with both the province and the federal government, when there is a riding distribution, the large urban centres are allocated ridings first, the boundaries are set and then what's left over is fitted together in various jigsaw puzzle manners to form ridings. It is very confusing.

Indeed, the term "Brant-Haldimand" doesn't really represent in entirety the riding I serve, because I have the township of North Dumfries, which is in the region of Waterloo in the north, as well as the county of Brant and two first nations, as I've said, and part of the old county of Haldimand, which includes the town of Haldimand and the town of Dunnville. It does make it very confusing, but of course, Mr Speaker, I want to assure you that I'm doing my best to make people realize that I am the member at the present time—the current member, as someone termed it—of that riding and doing my best to serve it, and that includes reporting back to the people and giving them the opportunity

to speak their minds to me.

Coming back to the bill, and I have wandered a bit, I am pleased to support it because it was, I assure you, a particular problem in the by-election in my riding. I hope we will be able to correct that.

I appreciate the presentation by the member for Don Mills and encourage the House to support it. Let's get on with the change even though there may be some very good changes in amendments coming through from the elections review commission.

Another favourite subject of mine is the matter of the designated terms of members of this House, where we're called MPPs. I still get many letters addressed to me as MLA. It's unfortunate, I think, that the term wasn't corrected in legislation. It was simply a resolution in 1938 by the government of the day and the term was changed from MLA to MPP.

I understand that except in Newfoundland and Quebec, in all of the other provinces, except Ontario of course, the members of the provincial houses are members of the Legislative Assembly, and I must say there is considerable confusion. Many times, I have been introduced as "the MP" and the MPs in my area have on many occasions been introduced as MPPs, and I think there's confusion.

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): I just call you Ron.

Mr Eddy: That, of course, is what I hope most of my constituents would call me—Ron or Eddy. It doesn't matter which when you have two first names.

It really is confusing to the general public to have those terms so close. I was researching the matter and found that indeed it was simply by resolution the change was made and not by legislation. I really think that we should proceed to determine the issue, and I would hope to see it changed. I found that several members over the years have attempted to make those changes but have not been successful. I'm hoping that will come forward.

Back to the bill again, I would say that I'm pleased that it has been presented, because it's one of the things that I would have liked to have had the opportunity to present myself. I think it's very important and it meets the problems of proxy voting for many people. I think that's important and I urge you to support it. Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I'm pleased to rise in support of Bill 60, brought by my colleague the member for Don Mills, Mr Johnson.

It is indeed appropriate that we look at all possible ways to encourage greater participation in the democratic process. When we consider that in such countries as Italy, the Italian government mandates that everybody has to vote, I'm not suggesting that we adopt that kind of posture, but it shows how other countries deem it necessary to ensure that as broad a number of people as

possible will vote. In fact, I remember that the Italian government used to send trains into Germany and Switzerland to get the so-called *gastarbeiter* to go and vote in their home town in general elections.

Any way that we can enhance the ability of people to vote should be considered. It may not be perfect, and I listened attentively to the member for York East commenting on perhaps the need to go to mail-in voting. Indeed, the advantage of mail-in voting would be that you would ensure that the person who had received the proxy would be voting the way you wished. I suppose if you don't have that trust level, that is always the concern.

In the meantime, this would be a very reasonable step to make sure that people who at the moment are not able to vote for various reasons, elderly persons particularly—when I consider what happened in the by-elections which occurred in the springtime of this year, there were many elderly people who, in the particularly severe weather we had during that time, didn't feel they would be able to come out to vote. There were other people who, for health reasons and other personal reasons, were going on holiday down south because of the inclement weather, and this would allow them to exercise their franchise.

As to the whole question of people being away at the time of an election, it's reasonable for us to review that because nowadays we know that with the changes in work patterns, it isn't always possible to plan your holidays and then just simply change them because there's a general election going on. Even though you may very much want to cast your vote in the election, at the moment you are shut out from that process because we don't allow this. Yet at the same time, we allow, under the present electoral rules, inmates in penal or correctional institutions who are not under sentence at that time to cast a vote through a proxy. It would seem only reasonable and fair that we'd extend that same principle to those people who, through disabilities or through their elderly age, cannot get out to vote or, alternatively, those people who cannot change their holiday or other travel plans.

1140

I very much hope that the government members will vote in favour of this so that we can send this out to committee and then we'll be able to consider it. Indeed, the suggestions that Mr Malkowski was mentioning could be brought forward, I presume, as amendments at that time.

My own particular desire would be for us to look at a permanent voters list. A permanent voters list would have great advantages for the taxpayers and the government, both in this province and in Canada. We are facing, according to the newspapers, the very likely election date for the federal election of October 25, because on the following day the list which was pre-

pared for the referendum last year will expire, and that would involve the expenditure of many millions of dollars to do a new enumeration.

When we consider the cost of enumeration, it is indeed massive and is often very inaccurate. The irregularities which have been regularly reported by all parties over the years about voters lists are something which we could address by having a permanent voters list. To the extent that governments collect data as to the eligibility of the citizens in that province to be able to draw certain benefits from the state, this demonstrates that we have the data, and with some relatively simple changes, we would be able to achieve a permanent voters list which would be (a) more accurate and (b) much less costly to the taxpayer.

At a time of desperate need for fiscal restraint, it would be a reasonable step for this government to contemplate, and that could be achieved through an amendment brought in if it was sent to committee, and indeed the discussions, as I have said, that Mr Malkowski, the member for York East, brought forward. These are all reasonable considerations that we should reflect on and allow to go forward in the best interests of the electorate and the taxpayer. Usually, the two are one and the same.

I applaud this amendment to the Election Act brought forward by my colleague. I would say that his concern is to make sure that the exercise of our democratic rights are ensured. They are fairly modest steps, but would ensure that we'd have a better chance of letting more people participate. I will be voting for this and I urge the government and the Liberals to vote along with this.

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): It is a pleasure for me to rise and take part in this debate this morning on the member for York Mills's bill, Bill 60. I must say that I am in agreement with anything that affords people the right to vote.

There are one or two flaws in it. As most times when private members' bills are presented in this House in the morning, there are flaws. The only flaw that I can see is that the only group that is being truly added to the list of those entitled to vote by proxy at the moment are people with travel plans. I would think that would include the snowbirds, but any government that calls an election when the snowbirds are down south has got to have rocks in its head, so I don't know.

Anyway, I feel that the right to vote is precious, very precious to us, and it's unfortunate that not enough of us in this country realize how precious that is. I have this idea in my head—it might not go over very well—but I would like to see that when you go to the polls to vote, the elections officer, the table officer, pulls off a bit at the bottom of your thing, hands it back to you, and then you can attach that to your income tax and you can get a rebate because you participated in the

process. That might seem a bit draconian to some people, but I think it would encourage people to vote.

As I said before, voting to me is precious. I was brought up in England in a place called Brighton, in Sussex-by-the-Sea, and my dad was a member of the Transport and General Workers' Union. I can tell you that in our House the privilege of taking part in an election, the privilege of voting, was uppermost in our minds all day. We used to have a family prayer before every meal, every day. Goodness knows, it's 60-odd years ago now, but I can remember my dad burying his face in his hands and praying for the defeat of the Tory party in England. It wasn't until 1945 when Winston Churchill was booted out and Clement Attlee became the Prime Minister that our prayers were answered.

Mr Turnbull: That was the beginning of the demise of Britain.

Mr Mills: I'm going to talk through you, Mr Speaker. We were brought up in my family to respect that preciousness, that being able to vote is so vital to the whole framework of the country we live in and the country I used to live in.

The municipal council was run by Tories in Brighton. They ran everything: They were the federal, they were all over the place like flies. Come election day, we used to champ at the bit: "Let's get to the polls. Let's round people up. Let's get them to vote." I was only a boy at the time, knocking on doors: "Please vote, please vote." Unfortunately, we would end the day just absolutely played out and my father was absolutely exhausted. Then we'd hear the results coming in. We'd sit there, and my dad would say, "Son, how come we keep losing? There's more of us than there is of them. What's gone wrong with the system?" And I used to really feel bad about that.

Anyway, the member's bill is very encouraging. I'm going to speak to the bill; I know he's getting edgy over there that I'm wandering off the bill and reminiscing. I'm going to support the bill. I'm going to support anything that encourages Canadians to take part in the democratic process. If this needs some refinement, if we have to have some discussion to make it possible, so be it, because we cannot do enough to encourage voters to vote in the municipal elections, in the federal elections and in the provincial elections.

I've got a little bit of time left. One of my colleagues wants to say a few words.

To you, sir, I will be supporting. I applaud your effort and I'm wholeheartedly behind absolutely anything that would encourage Ontarians to take part in the democratic process.

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): I appreciate the opportunity to make a few comments and, might I add, in a not trite or offhand way to Slugger Johnson, to pay tribute to his athletic prowess in a very

worthy cause, for cystic fibrosis. I know this is probably not particularly in order, but I couldn't help but make reference to his outstanding accomplishment last Saturday.

I want to join my colleagues in paying tribute to and indeed thanking the member for Don Mills for his thoughtful bill put before the House today. I think it's the kind of amendment that makes the process more user-friendly. Ultimately, people want to participate, and sometimes, through a variety of circumstances entirely beyond their control, they are unable to participate in the most fundamental right of parliamentary democracy: to cast their ballot.

1150

It's one of those things that many people would perhaps dismiss as a housekeeping measure. I think it's much more than that. The member for Don Mills, who has had a distinguished career of public service, is saying that he wants, in the early months of his service in this place, I must say, to provide something in a very positive way for people across this province to continue the opportunity of participating when circumstances would otherwise prohibit them from doing that.

It's also timely to note it's in the context of earlier discussion with respect to initiatives that open up the system to people, that makes it more, I guess I come back to that phrase "user-friendly," that makes people more comfortable in terms of accessibility.

I think it sends more than the particular message. The particular message and the particular provisions of the bill are very, very important, but it sends a message as well. The message is this: It's important for people to participate.

We have our battles in here all the time. Some of it is political rhetoric—let's be honest about that—and some of it is fundamental disagreement about philosophical or policy positions, but the one thing I think we all share, or we wouldn't be here, and I say this to all 130 members who are in this House from whatever extreme position they might have politically on the right, left, centre or wherever they fit, is that we believe in the system or we wouldn't be here and we believe we need to have people involved.

I've heard so many of my colleagues say, "Even if you disagree with me, get involved and vote." To the member for Don Mills, you've extended that opportunity to more people, and for that he's to be applauded.

The Acting Speaker: The government members have a very short amount of time.

Mr Huget: I'd like to join with my colleagues in congratulating the member for Don Mills for bringing the bill forward.

The bill on its surface appears to give rights to, for example, elderly and disabled persons in the province that they currently don't have. I think that's an inaccur-

ate reflection of our present act, because there is already in place a proxy voting procedure for people who, for example, for medical reasons are physically incapable of attending a polling place. They can already cast a vote by proxy.

In addition, I would think that in terms of people with disabilities there have been tremendous advances made in recent years in making polling places and the like more accessible. There isn't a lot of work to do in those areas, but certainly I think everyone in this House recognizes the need to ensure that there is accessibility.

When you look at the bill, although the elderly and disabled are mentioned in the bill, the only group I can see which, truthfully, is being added in terms of a proxy vote are those with personal travel plans. I think one could have quite a lengthy debate as to whether or not that's an issue that needs to take the same priority, for example, as elderly and disabled persons. There is and currently exists in our system an advance polling mechanism that would allow people to vote in advance should they be away on election day.

It's interesting to note, as some of my colleagues have mentioned, that the Lortie commission has recommended that the proxy vote be abolished altogether and replaced with a special ballot.

I feel this bill will cause a few more problems than it'll solve, and I won't be supporting it.

Mr David Johnson: I would certainly like to, first of all, thank all those who've participated in the debate, the member for Sarnia—I'll come back to him in a minute—the member for Brampton North in particular. He is one of the people who caught the essence of what I'm attempting to do here today; perhaps not doing it as well as I should. He used the term "user-friendly." Those are two words that came to me as I was contemplating this bill. That's exactly what I'm trying to do, to make the system easier for people to vote, because we want people to participate, and I think the member for Durham East has said this as well. We want to do anything we can to encourage Canadians to vote, and that's exactly what I'm trying to do and all I'm trying to do: to make the system more friendly, more available for people to participate.

I thank my colleague the member for York Mills. As usual, he's got some excellent ideas, different ideas. He brought in the international scene. If this bill is put forward to committee, many of his ideas could be looked at.

The member for Brant-Haldimand has a great deal of experience, as usual, and brings in a number of ideas. I've often wondered whether we were called an MPP or an MLA myself, but perhaps we can get that straightened out.

The members for York East and Sarnia have indicated that really what we've got here is already accom-

modated within the existing bill. I'm just going to read you a letter that I got after my by-election recently. The letter says, and this is from one of my people, one of my scrutineers, I guess:

"During the final hours of voting I was busy phoning a number of known PC supporters," naturally, because we're the PC Party, but think to yourself and substitute "Liberal" or "NDP," if you wish, "who were enumerated but had not voted. Several, four at least, pleaded that they were taken too ill to come down to the polling booth located in their apartment building." They were too ill to come down. These were elderly people. "These invalids"—and he names a certain gentleman—"seemed to live alone. I was advised by the PC lawyer that the only way these no-shows could vote was by the usual proxy," the usual proxy that has to be organized at least a day in advance, and we're talking here of election day itself. "I was also advised that it takes some hours, if not days, to arrange a proxy. Hence the PC supporters I referred to were disenfranchised. This is surely a violation of their human rights and one day could be a cause for legal action."

I don't know if there'd be legal action or not, but I think the point is there. Yes, we've made strides for the disabled; yes, we've opened up the polling areas. But there are people, for example, who may have an arthritic attack on the day of the election, and it's too late; they cannot arrange a proxy on that particular day. They would have had to have done it before. The other part of the bill that I'm introducing today, in addition to formally including seniors, the disabled and those who go away on vacation, is to allow them to get that proxy on the day in question.

Then the concern comes up: "What about fraud? People will abuse this system." Bear in mind again that we're trying to make a user-friendly system; we're trying to get Canadians to come out and vote. But what about fraud? The chief election officer says that's a concern that does come up but in actual fact is not borne out. It's something that people are always concerned about, but it's never borne out. He says: "The existing act prevents any person from voting by proxy on behalf of more than two electors"—and his wording is a bit unusual here—"and establishes a number of corrupt practices relating to abuse of proxy rights. These provisions should be sufficient to regulate expanded proxy entitlement."

What he's saying is that we should expand the proxy entitlement, that we can handle any potential fraud or abuse, and the basic thing we should do is to make this system more friendly and more accessible to people who have a legitimate excuse for not being there and not being able to vote: Let them have a proxy.

I might say that the issue of travel plans comes up as well. This is part of the amendment. Again this is trying to be user-friendly, trying to recognize that in our

society today people do travel, people go away; people go away for a month. Somebody said "snowbirds" earlier today. Snowbirds go away for two or three months. As a matter of fact, I've had people come to me after the by-election we had in April. They went south. I was the mayor of East York. There was no by-election even contemplated. They spent some time down south, and when they came back I was a member of provincial Parliament or MLA—one or the other; whichever the member says we should call it—and there was a new mayor. The whole process had taken place, and they were shocked and they wondered what happened: "How come you're no longer mayor? Why are you a member of the provincial Parliament?"

Mr McClelland: We're wondering the same thing over here.

1200

Mr David Johnson: All right. The point is that the proxy system wouldn't help those people. But there are other people who take shorter periods of time, who arrange their vacations with their spouse, with their children, and then they're put in an awkward spot. What do they do when an election comes up? Do they cancel their vacation? Do they disappoint their spouse and their children? Or do they miss their opportunity to vote and to participate in the decision-making and forming the next government? That's a difficult place to be in.

If we get back to those words "user-friendly," we would like to create a system where they could get a proxy. It's valid. They're not abusing the system. It's not fraud. It's legitimate. This is something the chief election officer has indicated. A lot of those people say: "Look, I planned this vacation for months in advance. I'm a bona fide elector. I've lived here. I've paid taxes for years and years. I want to have a say in my government, but I can't cancel my vacation. A prisoner in a correctional institution or a penal institution can get a proxy, but I can't get a proxy." They say something's wrong with the system and something should be changed.

That's a concern that comes up time and time again, along with the concern for seniors, the disabled, who may not fit within the medical category that exists at the present time, and certainly there are different interpretations there.

I would just say that this is only intended to be a bill to encourage Canadians to participate, to vote, and I hope all three parties could support it and we could get it to the proper legislative committee and get on with it. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member still has some time.

Mr David Johnson: All right. In the final two minutes, I'll just mention that one other concern that has come up is in terms of the administrative problems

that are associated with this. I just want to assure the members that I've talked to Mr Bailie, who is the chief election officer. This is the way I like to do things: I like to talk to the people who are going to be responsible for implementing this sort of thing. He says the administrative problems can be handled and he is recommending that indeed we go ahead and do this.

The last point I would make is that to make this user-friendly, the way I would like to see this system work and I think the way it could work is that on election day itself, if a senior citizen has an arthritic attack and can't get out to vote, right then and there on that day, a form could be brought to them. Any one of the three parties, I'm sure, or any one of the candidates would be more than happy to bring a form. The form could be filled in, the person who is going to vote the proxy could take that form right that same day to the polling location, could have the form validated right then and there on election day and vote, all in the same motion.

This would be a very streamlined process, it would be a process that the chief election officer said can work and it would be extremely user-friendly. I think it would involve people who are currently disenfranchised, and I hope it's something this House will consider.

The Acting Speaker: This completes private members' business.

RECALL ELECTION REQUEST ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE DÉCLENCHEMENT
D'ÉLECTIONS PAR PÉTITION

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): We will deal first with ballot item number 23 standing in the name of Mr McClelland. Are there any members opposed to a vote on this ballot item? If so, please rise in your place.

All those in favour of Mr McClelland's motion, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. A five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1205 to 1210.

The Acting Speaker: Would all members please take their seats. We are dealing with ballot item 23, standing in the name of Mr McClelland.

All those in favour of Mr McClelland's motion will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the table.

Ayes

Callahan, Caplan, Cunningham, Eddy, Fawcett, Johnson (Don Mills), Kwinter, McClelland, Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt), Poole, Turnbull, Witmer.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed to Mr McClelland's motion will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Abel, Akande, Bisson, Boyd, Cooper, Dadamo, Drainville, Duignan, Fletcher, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Haslam, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Kormos, Lessard, MacKinnon, Malkowski, Mammoliti, Marchese, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Rizzo, Waters, Wildman, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Winingger, Wiseman, Wood.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes are 12; the nays are 38. I declare the motion lost.

ELECTION AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI ÉLECTORALE

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): We now proceed to deal with ballot item number 24. Do we have any members opposed to a vote on this ballot item? If so, please rise. Ballot item 24 stands in the name of Mr Johnson.

Is it the pleasure of the House that Mr Johnson's motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1213 to 1218.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Can I have all members take their seats. We are now dealing with ballot item number 24, standing in the name of Mr Johnson, the member for Don Mills.

All those in favour of Mr Johnson's motion, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Bradley, Callahan, Caplan, Cunningham, Drainville, Eddy, Fawcett, Johnson (Don Mills), Kormos, Kwinter, Malkowski, McClelland, Mills, Perruzza, Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt), Poole, Rizzo, Stockwell, Turnbull, Witmer.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed to Mr Johnson's motion, please rise and remain standing until identified by the Clerk.

Nays

Abel, Akande, Bisson, Boyd, Cooper, Dadamo, Duignan, Fletcher, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Haslam, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Lessard, MacKinnon, Mammoliti, Marchese, Martin, Mathysen, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Waters, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winingger, Wiseman, Wood.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes are 20; the nays are 31. I therefore declare the motion lost.

This completes private members' business. I do now leave the chair to return at 1:30.

The House recessed at 1222.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Orillia): On January 27, 1992, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario became the first in Canada to ban its doctors from performing female circumcision. Unfortunately, this ban has not ended the practice and procedure in Ontario. Ontario doctors are reporting cases of female patients who have had circumcisions performed on them.

Female circumcision varies in degree of mutilation involving surgical removal of the female's external genitalia. This procedure can lead to a range of medical problems, from vaginal infection to death in childbirth.

I understand the cultural sensitivities that female circumcisions involve. However, when the college announced its ban it stated, "These procedures are not based on religious beliefs."

Last month in Vienna, the United Nations held a conference on human rights. Ed Broadbent was one of many who participated in the conference and listened to women tell their horror stories of abuse. It was found that the abuse of women has too long been dismissed as private, family, cultural or religious.

In Ontario today, I'm asking the Attorney General, also the minister responsible for women's issues, to take action. The CPSO has led the way; it's now your turn, Minister. The practice of female circumcision should be declared illegal and punishable by law. We must stop parents from having their young girls circumcised. I believe that with the cooperation of the federal government, the mutilation of young girls can be stopped. This is clearly child abuse. By changing the attitudes of Ontarians through laws and education, we can stop this form of child abuse.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): This afternoon I will be presenting a petition containing more than 1,500 names which petitions the region and the province of Ontario to immediately invoke and follow the jury recommendations arising out of the death of Laurie Brain which occurred on the Conestoga expressway in Kitchener and, more particularly, for the installation of median guard-rails and reconstruction of the roadway to make it safe for the travelling public of Ontario.

This petition was organized by Brock Cober, Rob Huber, Jonathan Weatherdon, three of the friends of the two young men killed in the June 15 cross-median accident on the Conestoga Parkway, and it is being done in loving memory of the seven people who have been tragically killed since 1990. I congratulate and support these young men in their efforts to persuade the minister

to adopt the jury recommendations to build these barriers now before any more deaths occur.

They are supported in this endeavour by Waterloo council, who have unanimously approved a motion calling for the reallocation of the money intended for sound barriers to the installation of median safety barriers. The Waterloo County Board of Education has also written to the minister asking for the immediate installation of median barriers.

I urge the Minister of Transportation not to wait until 1996. Please respond to these pleas from the families and friends of those who have been killed and from the citizens of Kitchener-Waterloo and act immediately to install median barriers on the Conestoga Parkway.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): Bill 48 was introduced to allow public sector employers and workers across the province to negotiate agreements following the principles of the social contract. It also includes measures that will permit the government to meet its target of reducing compensation costs.

This government is committed to saving \$2 billion in public sector compensation costs over the next three fiscal years. This, together with the additional \$4-billion cut in government spending and \$2.7 billion in revenue increases, will ensure that Ontarians will not see a massive transfer of its wealth from education and health care to interest on a monstrous debt.

The Liberals were obsessed with not allowing the NDP to be seen as champions of the public purse. Leader Lyn McLeod insisted she supported the principle of Bill 48, but nitpicked on technicalities in an attempt to woo votes from discontented public sector employees. Tory leader Mike Harris became offended when the government voted down his proposed amendments that attacked low-income workers, and when he thought there was a possibility of forcing an election, he cast the principles of the legislation aside to give precedence to forcing that election.

The Liberals and Tories are unable to accept the fact that this NDP government is proving its ability to govern and is leading the way in showing them how to save money. In a recent article in the Hamilton Spectator, freelance columnist Eric Dowd wrote, "Rae is a cut above the critics." Eric, you're spot on.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I rise today to announce the release of a discussion paper which I have produced with the support of my Liberal colleagues concerning the critical state of Ontario's forest industry and the individuals and communities that depend upon its strength for their survival.

It is no coincidence that since the NDP assumed

power, the forest industry in many communities in northern and eastern Ontario has suffered considerable financial and employment losses. While it is true that the global recession has hit Ontario's resource industries particularly hard, the NDP has magnified the losses of the forest industry by proposing regulations and implementing policies that have stifled investment and saddled the industry with unprecedented production costs.

Interestingly, we have heard nothing from the government's forestry industry action group. To date, a task force that was presumably designed to assist in meeting the serious economic challenges confronting the forest industry and many northern and eastern communities in this province has not been heard from.

The focus of our discussion paper is on promoting sustainability; that is, sustainable forestry practices and sustainable jobs in communities that depend upon the forest industry. We have taken this initiative because of the tremendous void left by the Rae government in addressing this important issue.

Ultimately, we hope that through this undertaking we can generate enough discussion around this important issue to wake up the Minister of Natural Resources and have him take action to ensure that the forest industry remains a vital and integral component of the economic development of this province.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): Since its election in September 1990, the Bob Rae NDP government has repeatedly attacked seniors.

In 1991, the NDP restricted OHIP coverage for seniors who travel to warmer climates for health reasons. In 1992, they reduced the seniors' tax grant, then changed it to a tax credit that is received by lower-income seniors only. The NDP also increased probate fees. On an estate of \$500,000, probate fees have risen from \$2,500 to \$7,000. The NDP Minister of Finance hasn't ruled out the possibility of introducing estate and wealth taxes.

Last year, the Bob Rae government removed several drugs from the list of medications which are free to seniors under the Ontario drug benefit program. This year, the drug program is under attack again. Soon many seniors will have to pay for their own prescriptions.

One of the most punishing NDP measures is a new user fee for long-term care in residential facilities. This fee, which came into effect on July 1, 1993, can be as high as \$12 a day, or \$372 a month. The NDP government has failed to consider the PC Party's suggestion that the fee increase at least be phased in over four years.

The NDP has also switched to multiple-year drivers' licences, which require seniors to pay up front for six

years' fees at once, even though they may not be able to drive for six more years.

Enough is enough. Seniors have already paid their fair share. They do not deserve this assault by the Bob Rae socialist government.

1340

GRIMSBY ROTARY CLUB

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): I rise to pay tribute to the Grimsby Rotary Club. This group recently raised \$1,000 towards the \$3,000 cost of purchasing a new tracking dog for the Niagara Regional Police. The new dog, a German shepherd named Saint, replaces a police dog killed in the line of duty last summer. Saint's arrival means there is presently a dog on duty every night in the Niagara region.

While Saint is not trained to track explosives or narcotics, he can track suspects, lost people or stolen property. He is also trained to protect his master, Constable Scott Johnston, from potential harm.

Saint is worth a lot more than his purchase price. He's now valued at more than \$40,000 because of his advanced training. I'd say that puts him up there with many of our university graduates.

According to police, this is the first time a local service club has helped offset the cost of a police dog, but it's likely not the last. Other rotary clubs in the Niagara region are considering making fund-raising an ongoing project. I would like to congratulate the Grimsby Rotary Club for doing a doggone good job of helping keep the streets of Niagara safe.

RODNEY JOHNSTON

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): On behalf of the official opposition, the Liberal caucus, I would like to congratulate Mr Rodney Johnston of Ajax, Ontario, on being named 1992 firefighter of the year.

On March 25 of this year, Mr Johnston performed a singular feat of bravery which saved the lives of two people. On his way home from his shift at the fire station that night, Mr Johnston observed that a neighbourhood house was on fire. After contacting police, he entered and searched the house, finding two men and helping them out. Mr Johnston did this without breathing apparatus or protective equipment, in life-threatening conditions.

Mr Johnston's efforts and dedication in this instance were indeed heroic. I'm informed that the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs will honour him at its annual meeting in Quebec City in August. We join with them and the sponsor of the award, the Insurance Bureau of Canada, in congratulating Mr Johnston.

This award is an important way of recognizing the very real danger in which Mr Johnston placed himself on that night. More generally, it is a reminder to us of the countless other incidents where firefighters and police across Ontario have put themselves at physical

risk to help and protect others.

Today, our hats are off to Mr Johnston and to the thousands of men and women in the province who perform the often unseen duties involved in fire and police service.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): To the Premier and to the Minister of Finance, I suggest that your treatment of the Metro Toronto school board under the social contract legislation is unconstitutional. Provinces do not have the power to impose indirect taxes. Your demand that Metro send you a cheque for \$93 million is precisely that; it is nothing more than property taxation through the back door.

There is no question that people are willing to do their part to fight the deficit and to support quality education, but Metro property taxpayers are already doing their part. They are taxed to the hilt. The fallout from the social contract is that the government will have the power to control wages, to disregard legal contracts, negotiated wage agreements and even our nation's Constitution.

Treasurer, we've seen your targets for achievable savings shift from day to day, just as the numbers about the savings needed and the size of the deficit fluctuate on a daily basis. Come clean with us, Mr Premier. If you intend to have province-wide pooling of education taxes, tell us that. Have the courage to make it an election issue, but don't bring it in through the back door.

This money belongs to Metro property taxpayers and not to the province. The Metro Toronto school board does not receive any transfer payments from the province and it is unfair to request that money that has never been paid in the first place by the province be given to the provincial government to pay for its incompetence.

TOUCHSTONE YOUTH SERVICES

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): On Saturday, July 17, I was very happy to participate in a fund-raiser for Touchstone Youth Services. Myself, along with Reverend James Garland of St Luke's Church and also Reverend Ian Noseworthy from St Cuthbert's Church, as well as a host of other volunteers, flipped hamburgers and hot dogs on the barbecue at the corner of Bayview and Merton.

East Yorkers were quite generous in their support. All in all it was a successful event, a beautiful day, and the cooks made some of the best burgers and dogs I've ever tasted.

The proceeds go to Touchstone Youth Services, which is a shelter for homeless youth. Located in York East, Touchstone serves Metro Toronto youths 16 to 20 years of age. They provide shelter, food and counselling and, most importantly, an alternative to the street.

Although the need for emergency shelter for young

people in East York was first documented several years ago, the community's struggle to establish a centre was only attained when Touchstone finally opened its doors in September 1991. Thanks to the concerned efforts of our community and the staff of Touchstone, our young people have an opportunity to improve their circumstances.

Young people have much to offer, a lot to contribute. Let's support them.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Statements by ministers?

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Today the CBC Radio Noon phone-in topic is to have callers call in on their vacations and what their vacations are like, why they like where they are on their vacations. This is a hard-hitting call-in show today. There are still 15 minutes left. I don't know if any members of the Legislature would like to call Radio Noon to tell them about the vacation that members of the Legislature are enjoying today.

The Speaker: I don't think the honourable member wants me to comment on that. It's not a point of order, though it is a point of great interest to many.

Mr Bernard Grandmaitre (Ottawa East): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm somewhat disappointed with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who didn't make a statement today, who will be introducing legislation for first reading on the Ottawa-Carleton review.

I think this is very unfair when we have to sit in this House in July and the Minister of Municipal Affairs is in Ottawa making a major announcement and no minister without portfolio, the parliamentary assistants, even the minister responsible for the Ottawa-Carleton area, is making a statement or at least saying something about the Ottawa-Carleton review.

The Speaker: To the member for Ottawa East: I can indeed handle points of order, but points of disappointment I am not able to assist you on.

ORAL QUESTIONS

NEW WCB HEADQUARTERS

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Minister of Labour. He will probably be aware that this morning our public accounts committee attempted to deal with last week's report by the Provincial Auditor on the Workers' Compensation Board building. That report was a very damning report.

But this morning, Minister, as I'm sure people have told you, the government members on that committee stonewalled. They passed a motion that said essentially we would not be dealing with this until 1996. The motion says, "That the standing committee on public accounts return to the issue of the WCB's new headquarters after the WCB has reported back to this committee in 1996...."

The opposition members then tried to get a motion passed that would allow us to have before us the chair of WCB to answer some very serious questions. The government members stonewalled. They refused to allow the discussion to go ahead on the report.

My question to the minister is this: Will the minister undertake to the House today to assure us that you will instruct the government members on your committee to allow a full and open discussion of this report that has been prepared by the Provincial Auditor on WCB's building?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): The government is complying with the recommendation in the report that states, "In early 1996 the WCB should report back to the standing committee on public accounts detailing all costs associated with the relocation." That is in fact what we have every intention of doing.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): What a joke. That is really a joke.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Brampton South.

Mr Phillips: I can't tell you how angry—among other things, the Provincial Auditor. I've never seen a Provincial Auditor who expressed such outrage as the Provincial Auditor did this morning in the refusal of this government to permit a full and open discussion on the report. Believe me, this will not be allowed to stand, Minister. It is time for you to step in and to ensure that the public accounts committee, the committee of the Legislature that is designed to deal with specific issues like this, is allowed to deal with it thoroughly and openly.

1350

The only conclusion—I say this as sincerely as I can—that the public can reach as they listen to the debate this morning is that for some reason or other the government doesn't want a full and open discussion on this. So I repeat what I said earlier: Will you undertake today to ensure that the public accounts committee will have a full, open discussion involving the senior people at Workers' Compensation Board, so that we can get to the heart of the matter on this very damning report on Workers' Compensation Board's new building?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: The issue of the new WCB building has been public from the beginning. Our members on the public accounts committee voted in favour of having the Provincial Auditor do a report on the building, and I might say that the committee held two days of public testimony on the building and there was ample opportunity for members to question the Workers' Compensation Board on the reasons for proceeding with the building.

Mr Phillips: I assure you that the public will not allow this not to be debated in a full and open dis-

cussion by the all-party legislative committee, and you may try and stonewall this, but it will not be allowed to stand. I assure you of that. I will say again that the auditor's report could not have been more damning, and it is littered with significant concerns about Workers' Compensation Board's decision to locate this building and to build this building.

Surely, recognizing the significant concerns, recognizing that the Provincial Auditor wants an opportunity to have a full and open hearing on this, recognizing that Workers' Compensation Board just today issued, I think, a 51-page report that the committee has had no chance to have an open discussion on, I repeat to you again and I would urge you to carefully consider your answer: Will you undertake to the Legislature today to ensure that the government majority on that committee will allow for a full, open discussion quickly?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: We are following the advice given to us in the report. There have been hearings on this. The member knows it. I don't know where he was when the hearings were held in the committee on the WCB building.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): My question is to the designated Deputy Premier, I think, of the day. I would ask the acting Deputy Premier if she would outline the provisions for the government's expenditure control plan for last fiscal year, including the measures taken to ensure that there were not overexpenditures made by government ministries on a last-minute basis for last fiscal year.

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I'll attempt to answer that and I think I may also take part of the question under advisement and have the Minister of Finance provide more detail to the member opposite at a later date.

Certainly, within various ministries, there were attempts throughout the course of the year to meet in-year savings targets that had been identified as part of the budget, and through the expenditure control plan as in its former generation, I guess, throughout the last fiscal year. We had identified in terms of year-ends, at a certain point in time, freezes that were to be put on. We're certainly aware that in some ministries that was not adhered to and that caused us great concern and there were actions taken following that to follow up on that and to ensure that didn't happen again.

I'm sure that the member must have a specific incident that he would like to raise and perhaps in his supplementary, when I hear that, I might be able to provide some more information.

Mr Elston: We now know why the member is the acting Deputy Premier. She's very observant. I do in fact have an item. While I was reading one of my favourite newspapers, the Terrace Bay Schreiber News,

I was taken by surprise when it reported on remarks by the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, who said, "I'm glad this project is going forward," and, paraphrasing, "The Northern Development and Mines minister, Shelley Martel, told the crowd her ministry was given 48 hours to come up with ways to spend the remaining \$8 million in the budget before the fiscal year ended on March 31."

My question, having quoted the news from Terrace Bay Schreiber, is to the minister: Who authorized this last-minute evacuation of the government Treasury, how many ministries were involved, and what has been done to control this type of last-minute spending in this current fiscal year?

Hon Ms Lankin: The specific project that's being talked about, I'm sorry I don't know the detail of it, but it sounds, from what the member has reported, as if this is a capital project.

I think in fact we have been very consistent in saying that we wanted to maintain high levels of capital expenditures, and in many situations there has been slippage in some projects over the course of the year where construction couldn't get going fast enough or where parts of the construction tenders took longer to let. There are a number of reasons why, over the course of the year, that might happen.

I think it is fair to say that with respect to capital expenditures, where there have been projects that have been awaiting funding that might be able to start immediately if they got approval and be flowed through that capital budget, that expenditure would happen.

I think that's different from some of the things we saw during the course of the 1980s. I can remember when I was out there in the community the year-end budget sort of spending spree where social agencies were called and told: "You've got all of these operating dollars left. Go spend them."

We're trying to bring an end to that, because I think that culture in government, no matter how or who the government is, is not the way in which we'll be able to proceed in the future.

Mr Elston: While I have just quoted the paraphrase in the Terrace Bay Schreiber News of Minister Martel's earlier remarks, I quote this time directly from the Terrace Bay Schreiber, quoting the minister herself, "And we were very, very pleased that the reeve was able to put this project together so quickly," meaning that he had to come together with this project in the last 48 hours of the budget year.

I repeat, what steps were taken to approve this type of mass evacuation of the Treasurer's—as he then was known—vaults, and what have you done this year to ensure that nothing similar, nothing anywhere close to the mass evacuation as the fiscal year winds down, will occur so that the taxpayers of this province will be

protected from this last-minute New Democratic Party spending spree?

Hon Ms Lankin: I will again say that I think the member is doing what opposition members will do. He's doing a generalization, a characterization of something which I don't think accurately represents the situation.

When we've talked in this Legislature—and many of us have raised this issue and it's been an area of concern—about last-minute spending sprees that go on within ministries or organizations, we've talked about spending other direct operating expense moneys, those pools of money where people go out and buy computers or buy fax machines or get it out so that they can protect that level of their budget for the next year. That's the kind of spending we've put a freeze on, although we acknowledge that we've found some areas that didn't abide by that.

With respect to capital dollars, with respect to the capital budgets of government which go to construct buildings—in this case, I understand a medical clinic in a small town—those projects that await year after year to be funded, when there is sufficient funding towards year-end, we will always look at where there has been money left unspent because projects haven't moved fast enough and we will always take the opportunity, where we can, with our funding partners like the municipalities, to move quickly to approve those projects and put shovels in the ground because that's delivering jobs to communities and ensuring future delivery of services to Canadians.

NEW WCB HEADQUARTERS

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): My question is to the Minister of Labour. This morning your members of the public accounts committee rammed through one of the most repugnant motions that I have ever experienced in eight years in office in this place. The NDP motion will effectively block the public accounts committee from examining the issue of the WCB headquarters until 1996 and insulate the executives of the WCB from public scrutiny on this matter for three more years.

Can you as the minister tell us who was the architect of this coverup? Can the minister tell us who was so afraid of what we would learn about this matter that they decided to gag a committee of this House? Who is responsible for this motion? Your office, your good friend the chairman of the WCB, Mr Odoardo Di Santo, or the Premier's office? Who? Please tell us.

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): I think it's very unfortunate that individuals are labelled the way that has just been done by the across the way. I want to say that the issue of the WCB building has been public from the beginning.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Mackenzie: Our members on the public accounts committee voted in favour of having the Provincial Auditor do a report on the building, and that has been done.

The Speaker: Supplementary.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The supplementary is for the member for Mississauga South.

1400

Mrs Marland: It's unfortunate that whoever wrote your briefing notes, which you have to read in answer to a very straightforward question, doesn't really know what's going on. If the members of your committee cannot report back to you, I suggest you appoint other members to that committee.

We have what we call a kick it under the carpet motion. That's what we're dealing with here, Mr Minister. Last week, your members on that committee passed a motion to have the committee review the auditor's report in closed session. This morning, they passed a further motion sweeping the report totally under the carpet for a three-year period and voted against my motion to have the head of the WCB appear before the committee to explain his objections to some of the auditor's findings and conclusions.

Minister, you are compromising the public accounts committee. You are compromising the auditor of this province, who is the final check and balance on behalf of the taxpayers. You have a responsibility to the taxpayers of this province as a minister of the crown.

Minister, wouldn't you agree that this reeks of a coverup, of an effort to protect your appointees to the WCB, and if it's not a coverup and you don't object to subjecting this matter to a complete and timely review, will you, or whoever is in charge over there, direct your spear carriers on the public accounts committee to stop objecting to our efforts to get to the bottom of this mess? Minister, we implore you—

The Speaker: Will the member complete her question, please.

Mrs Marland: —to allow this public process to take place. The auditor has identified this building as not being value for money.

The Speaker: Would the member please complete her question.

Mrs Marland: Minister, will you open up the books on this building once and for all?

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I want to make it clear, first, that I totally reject the language being used by the member across the way. I want to also say that the recommendation for a look at the building in 1996 is

clearly laid out in the report. It's up to the all-party committee to ascertain how they will deal with the report and that is exactly what they're doing, as I understand it.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): After the events were reported to me by the members of the public accounts committee, a committee, by the way, that the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale used to chair, a committee that was one of the committees of this Legislature that operated in a non-partisan way to ferret out waste in the system—today, we have the majority of the NDP members blocking this committee, whose goal and whose purpose is to ferret out the waste, to report on it, to expose it, and more importantly, to stop it from ever happening again.

I would ask you, by way of final supplementary, Minister, to reflect on your years of experience here, particularly those in opposition, when there were government members who relished the opportunity, along with opposition members, to get to the bottom of taxpayers' dollars being wasted. I would ask you to meet in caucus with your members on this committee, stop the coverup, stop the stifling of the information, allow the auditor and allow the committee to proceed with the exposé of this dramatic waste of taxpayers' dollars. Will you do that for democracy? Otherwise, Minister, I ask you to tell me, why have an auditor, why have a public accounts committee?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: Surely the leader of the third party is aware that the auditor is an independent body who is entitled to speak and express opinions. We appreciate his views. We are complying with the recommendations in the report, and that, I think, clearly indicates that it's not a coverup, and that's a ridiculous comment, once again.

The Speaker: New question, the member for Etobicoke-West.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Etobicoke-West has the floor.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I would suggest the minister speak to the auditor, because the auditor doesn't share the same opinion that he just enunciated.

The Speaker: To whom is your question directed?
PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): My question is to the Chair of Management Board. Yesterday, sir, nearly 3,000 civil servants, despite many years of service, received layoff notices effective just after Christmas this year. These public servants understand that we are in the midst of tough economic times and that we all must share the burden of restraint. I put it to you very sincerely, sir.

However, what they don't understand is why they

face job losses while the list of NDP friends and family who have been given plum jobs by your government continues to grow. Minister, can you explain to these nearly 3,000 families that don't know what 1994 will hold for them why the NDP faithful remained untouched in Bob Rae's Ontario?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): The member for Mississauga West raises an issue which is a very important and very serious issue. That's one of the reasons why I guess the issue should be dealt with with some real serious thought on the part of all who decide to stick their nose into it.

First of all, there have not been 3,000 layoff notices issued to anyone. Something less than 2,000 layoff notices have been issued. The member for Mississauga West—

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): Etobicoke West.

Hon Mr Charlton: I'm sorry, Etobicoke West—should understand that these are layoff notices that result from announcements that were made in April or prior to April as a result of the expenditure reduction process.

The layoff notices which have been issued have been issued under a number of programs, both under the collective agreement and voluntary programs, with those who aren't part of the bargaining unit, around redeployment, retraining and direct assignment.

About a third of the people who have received layoff notices have a job offer guarantee, so that about 600 and change of those roughly 2,000 have a job offer guarantee, an absolute guarantee of employment.

Secondly, of those who have gone on to the surplus list to date, 358 of them have already been redeployed, placed in new jobs. It's our very clear expectation that with the kinds of programs we have in place, and given the cooperation of the bargaining units and others, all the people being impacted will be redeployed in this process.

Mr Stockwell: I don't think that's going to sit well with those people who received their layoff notices, some guarantee from this government that potentially they could be redeployed or not redeployed. The fact of the matter is that there's a significant number of people who've received layoff notices. As far as they are concerned, they are laid off effective January 1, 1994, and they've been given absolutely no guarantee they're going to be gainfully employed after that period of time.

Yet I have a list of 25 names of NDP friends who have been given positions since your government took office and I'm sure we've missed some. These members of the NDP family have been given either appointments, political jobs or high-paying civil service positions.

Let me read a few: Mr Stephen Lewis—we all recall Mr Stephen Lewis; Jack Layton; Marc Eliesen, who has since flown the coop; Dale Martin; Karl Morin-Strom; Richard Johnston; Michael Decter; Laura Ziemba; Anne Creighton—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Stockwell: —Wally Majesky; Odoardo Di Santo; Linda Jolley, Carol Phillips, Walter Pitman, Doug Davis, David Agnew, Gerry Caplan. Are any of these people receiving layoff notices today? I'd like to know that.

Hon Mr Charlton: Let me first pick up on some of the comments that the member made in his preamble about the layoff notices and those who are in receipt of them specifically. I repeat what I said earlier, and I'll add a couple of comments to it, that those who have received layoff notices were people whose positions were affected by the expenditure control program and the amalgamations of several ministries. Those announcements were made four months ago, in April. Since April, as these layoff surplus notices have gone out, 358 of those people have already been placed, and I repeat that. In fact, that number is double in the last month as the direct assignment process has gathered steam.

Secondly, as I said, a full third of those people have access to a job offer guarantee, a permanent guarantee of employment. They will be redeployed. As we move through the rest of the redeployment and retraining process, the vast majority of these people will be placed.

Now to the second part of the member's question. As the member romped through a list of a dozen or 15 appointments out of the thousands of appointments that occur each year in this province, I would have to assume that the 15 people he's named mean that the rest of the thousands were all Liberals and Tories or citizens without affiliation. And no, none of those thousands of appointments are receiving layoff notices at this point.

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Mr Stockwell: Let me just say that we don't have time to go through the list of thousands of appointments that you've made since you've taken office. We all know full well the type of appointments that you've made. This is simply the tip of the iceberg.

Those people who received layoff notices through expenditure control plans and amalgamation and redeployments, when they're left in the cold, are not going to feed their children and they're not going to pay their mortgages. Empty rhetoric. When these people get appointed, that's the guarantee that's going to get these people jobs.

I put it to the minister: If this is the kind of attack you're going to make, why is it not part of the attack to

examine people like the Jack Laytons, the Dale Martins, the Richard Johnstons, the Pitmans, the Agnews, the Caplans, the list of NDP appointments you've made over three years? Why are these people not on the list of public employees who are receiving layoff notices today?

Don't tell me about amalgamation and redeployment. You know some of those people are going to be out of work effective January 1. You know some of them will fall through the cracks. I ask you: Why are none of the NDP hacks whom you've spent so much time appointing not on your unemployment list today?

Hon Mr Charlton: Two things in response to the member's last rant there. Firstly, we believe that all of the people who have received surplus notices to date can be effectively dealt with. A successful negotiation under the social contract might increase the certainty of that happening somewhat. In terms of the list the member keeps referring to, Stephen Lewis, Marc Eliesen, Anne Creighton, Wally Majesky and Jack Layton don't work for this government, so in his own view their employment has already been affected.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a question for the Solicitor General about casino gambling. The casino gambling bill, as everyone knows, is going to be brought before the House very soon, in the midst of the summer months when most people are on vacation and perhaps not aware that the Legislature is sitting.

I would like draw to attention, through a question to the minister, the Solicitor General, to the following. Windsor Police Chief Jim Adkin says that if he doesn't have the police resources he needs to combat crime, the doors of Windsor's casino shouldn't be opened. He was addressing the Kiwanis Club in Windsor, and he went on to say: "The casino came to the community on the pretence it would remain safe. Until it can be properly policed, it shouldn't exist." Adkin also said, when referring to the extra police officers, that he needed them three weeks ago so they can be trained, but the chief doesn't want to see his officers pulled from other areas of the community because of the casino.

I'd like to ask the Solicitor General, because this question cannot be fobbed off to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations today because she's not present; she usually is, but she's not present today. I ask the member, is he now prepared to counsel the government House leader to withdraw this bill in light of the comments that have been made by the chief of police in the city of Windsor?

Hon David Christopherson (Solicitor General): I'm pleased to answer the question the honourable member poses. Let me say very clearly, as he has already mentioned, that the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations is the lead minister responsible

for the casino legislation as well as the Ontario casino project, which includes and encompasses the policing necessary in this particular community around this particular pilot project.

However, let me say that I have also met with the chief of police and we have talked about this issue in the course of our discussions. To date, to the best of my knowledge, he is satisfied that indeed the needs of the Windsor community are being met. He certainly leaves open the possibility for that to be reviewed as time goes on. But as I understand it, from my discussions with him and my discussions with the minister taking the lead for this government, the needs in the Windsor community, as currently planned, are being met.

Mr Bradley: The reason, of course, that I directed the question to the Solicitor General is that his responsibility in the province is for all police forces and reports to the House in this connection, whether it's any kind of crime that takes place or whether we're dealing with civil matters.

As well, I've raised the social contract with the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and its effect on policing. Jacqueline Smrke of the Windsor Star reports: "The demands of Ontario's social contract are an added complication. City police were recently told by city council to slash \$1.2 million from their 1993 budget because the province is cutting Windsor's municipal grants by \$10 million. Adkin said earlier the cutbacks may force him to move officers from various other departments.

"At the present time, the province is looking at pulling out as much as they can and leaving behind as little as they can—that's the business side to it," he told one Kiwanis member."

In view of the fact that the social contract, as you people call it, the contract-breaking that you're engaged in at the present time, means that the Windsor police force will have to reduce its budget, how can the minister contend to this House that in fact there's going to be sufficient policing to deal with the many problems related to crime as they relate to casino gambling in Windsor and elsewhere?

Hon Mr Christopherson: I heard two questions in there, and I'll try to answer both as briefly as possible. One was with regard to the needs of the Windsor community vis-à-vis the casino project. Again I would reiterate that those needs are being met and that indeed the policing costs, the increased costs that will be incurred as a result of the casino being in that community, are being covered off by the proceeds from the casino and that further negotiations in the out years will take place with the local police services board, the municipal council and the minister responsible as time goes by.

On the other issue, in terms of the social contract, let

me say very directly that I was pleased that there was a sectoral agreement with police associations across the province. That of course allows us to set out the framework by which local police service boards may reach specific agreements for their individual communities. We all realize the pressure this puts on all the services across the province, but I'm satisfied that our police service boards as well as our chiefs, officers and local councils are prepared, committed and quite capable of dealing with the constraint measures in a way that does not jeopardize the safety of the citizens in any community across Ontario.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I'd like to as well apologize on behalf of the member for Etobicoke West for leaving Ross McClellan and David Reville off the rogues' gallery list. I know they both would have been very disappointed not to have hit the list. I just wanted to say that.

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SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services on an issue which, as a parent and as a former educator, I feel very strongly about. In December 1990, close to three years ago, I asked the Premier to immediately coordinate a nutrition program for our school children. He said he would, and I believed him. Six months later, I asked the former minister. She said she had a plan, and I believed her. Six months later, I asked the Premier again. Again, he gave his personal support, as well as that of the Office of the Premier, and I believed him.

Minister, it's been three years and you have done nothing, absolutely nothing. Yes or no, Minister. Will you establish a nutrition program so that no Ontario child goes to school in September hungry?

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): I have to say that despite the criticism the leader of the third party has launched in his question, I do none the less appreciate very much the question that's being asked, because it does deal with a very serious issue. I think there is indeed some legitimacy in his criticism in terms of how long it has taken us to be able to deal effectively with this issue.

We are dealing with it. The answer is yes, we are interested in putting an initiative together, which will not resolve through any action of the provincial government the question of nutrition in and of itself, but I think we are looking at the appropriate role we can play as a government, together with local communities and together with a whole array of volunteer initiatives that we know exists in our communities across the province to help us address the question of hunger as it relates to children, particularly children in school, and child nutrition. We are very much interested in that. My hope is that we can have some activities under way later this year.

Mr Harris: Minister, I have asked your government now a dozen times to take some action and show leadership. The last time, I even offered the Premier my own time if he would give me the green light and the mandate I need to go out on behalf of this Legislature in a non-partisan way, on behalf of all 130 of us, and coordinate the program.

My proposal to you and to the Premier at that time would not cost the taxpayers any money, it was not a taxpayer-paid program, but it did require a commitment from the government of Ontario and an endorsement of the program.

We would all benefit in the long run. You know the studies are there that when children go to school hungry, they don't learn properly and you further disadvantage a segment of society in Ontario today. It's a problem that crosses all lines of race, of gender, even of economic family situation.

Quite frankly, I'm fed up with the rhetoric. I would ask you today, Minister, for the 12th time, to give us a firm undertaking that we will have a program in place this September, or I would ask you to be up front, as you've not been the previous 11 times, nor has the Premier, and just tell me once and for all that you don't plan to do anything, you wash your hands of it, in which case we will proceed on our own.

Hon Mr Silipo: If we were not planning to do anything, I would be standing up and telling the honourable member that we would not be doing anything. We are planning to take some initiatives. I don't think I would agree with the member in his belief that we could take some initiative of this kind without being prepared to look at what additional dollars we would need to spend. Again I would say to him that in looking at that, we also recognize that this is not a question of simply the provincial government putting in a whole pile of dollars and saying that's going to resolve the problem. We know that isn't the solution.

As to the leader of the third party going out and encouraging, in whatever way he wants to encourage, initiatives that we know are under way and initiatives that people are interested in pursuing, he has not only my full blessing in doing that but I think he received the encouragement of the Premier when he raised this question the last time, very much so, for him to do that. I encourage him to do that as well. Indeed, I encourage all members of the House to do that. In fact, I look forward to his continuing support on this issue.

I don't expect we'll be able to have something in place for September of this year, but I hope we'll be able to have something in place for later in the school year.

STUDENT SAFETY

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): My question is to the Minister of Education and Training. There

is growing concern among my constituents, specifically within the education system, about violence in the schools. In fact, there have been a couple of committees set up locally, the Wellington county task force on youth violence and the Waterloo task force on violence. These community-based committees are organized to address the societal issue of youth violence. Members of these organizations include: crown attorney representation; municipal and provincial police forces; public and separate boards of education; probation officers; corrections, race and ethnocultural representatives, as well as other community-based agencies.

My question is this: What is being done regarding the issue of violence in the schools, and what is being done to ensure the security and safety of school personnel and students?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I appreciate the question from the member, and I know of his ongoing interest in this issue. I certainly can tell the member that there is a group of people within the Ministry of Education and Training, in the violence prevention secretariat of the ministry, working on this issue. We're also working with teachers' federations, in particular the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, with its Safe School Task Force.

But I would be less than honest if I told the member we were doing everything that needed to be done. I believe very strongly that the ministry, in cooperation with our communities and the federations and students and others involved in the whole question of safety in our schools, needs to become more proactive, and that's exactly what we intend to do.

There are a lot of good ideas in the communities, there's a lot of experience in our communities, and the Ministry of Education and Training needs to become much more involved in this issue, because there's concern in every area of the province.

Mr Cooper: Right now school's out, but shortly there are going to be a lot of students going back to school, and usually over the summer a lot of people move and there are new students coming into the schools.

The principals are responsible for the safety and security of school personnel and students. Because of section 44.1 of the Young Offenders Act, principals of schools are not made aware that young offenders are attending their institutions. Do principals or superintendents have a way to find out this information that they need to do their job effectively?

Hon Mr Cooke: The member will be aware that the Young Offenders Act is in fact federal legislation, but this is a question and an issue that has been raised with me in other parts of the province as well.

When the ministry becomes more proactive, and we

intend to do that on this issue, I can assure the member that obviously one of the groups of people in one of the other levels of government that we're going to have to talk to will be the federal government, so that this issue and other issues can be appropriately dealt with, so that students and staff can feel safe in the schools they attend.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources. The question concerns the northern environment, the northern forests and, more particularly, northern jobs.

Since your administration took power, there are 30 million fewer trees being planted in Ontario's crown forests. You mulched 11 million trees just last spring. The area tended in forestry is down by 50% since Lyn McLeod was the Minister of Natural Resources. We've seen huge increases in hydro rates, WCB costs, the forest companies are out of control, and just lately, we have heard of the stumpage fees and the area charges. The member for Timiskaming, the member for Kenora and myself toured the northeast. We heard about this issue in virtually every community we stopped in.

Are you prepared to stand in the Legislature today and commit that you will eliminate the increases in stumpage fees and area charges that so dramatically impact on northern jobs and northern communities?

Hon Howard Hampton (Minister of Natural Resources): The member wants to get a number of issues on the agenda at the same time, so permit me to answer those issues.

It was not this government that concluded the construction of nuclear plants that cost the province \$14 billion. It was those people over there, the Liberals. It was not this government that signed a contract with the government of Manitoba to purchase and import another \$13-billion worth of power without ascertaining if the province needed it. This government did not make those deals. That government, when it was in power, did it, and if people want to know why power rates are going up today, look no further than Lyn McLeod, the member for Fort William, who was the Minister of Energy at the time.

That party, while it was the government, continued the mythology that reforestation and care for the forests consist only of sticking little seedlings in the ground. It is a far more complex process than that. It involves tending. It involves making use of aerial seeding. It involves letting nature do its part. We are trying to build a balanced forest policy, something that another government should have done when the province had more money to do it with.

Mr Brown: I don't know, but I don't think I heard an answer to the question about stumpage fees and area charges.

I have a letter from the Atikokan Loggers and Citizens Organization, one that you might be familiar with, addressed to our leader, Mrs McLeod. It said:

"We met with Howard Hampton on Thursday, July 15, here in Atikokan.

"Mr Hampton stated that we should go to our local MNR office to cut deals. His deal is still the deferral of fees to a later date. This is not a deal for us; it means only bankruptcy. 'Pay now or pay three times as much later!' Some deal...

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"Mr Hampton is telling us repeatedly that he does not have the power to help us, and that he has to meet with the Minister of Finance. Mr Laughren's office is telling us that Mr Hampton does have the power...who are we to believe?

"These two ministers are just buying time and playing political games at our expense. This has got to stop."

Minister, my question is the same question the loggers ask: Please try to help us understand who we should believe.

Hon Mr Hampton: Once again, I remember the meeting with the particular gentlemen, and I pointed out two other things to them.

First of all, I think anyone who looks at Ontario's stumpage fee system would say that it is probably at least 10 years out of date, perhaps 15 years out of date. Once again, we as a government are having to fix something that governments before us, if they had been doing their job, would have taken a look at and would have looked at restructuring the system.

I acknowledge that some independent contractors and some sawmills have difficulty with the current system of stumpage fees. I only say to the member that he will remember that lumber prices hit \$570 Canadian funds back in January, February and March. When that happens, it has an indexing effect on stumpage fees and, three months following that, stumpage fees rise.

We will do what we can to help those individual mills, but some of the independent contractors will have to talk to the mill owners. Since some of the mill owners derived a very extensive economic benefit when lumber prices were high, they have to turn some of that benefit over to the independent contractors now, to be sure that everyone is being fair.

DRIVERS' LICENCES

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I have many examples of mismanagement at the Ministry of Transportation. This is to the Minister of Transportation. Many examples of mismanagement at the Ministry of Transportation are reported to me, but I'd like to quote specifically one.

John Bottomley from Calendar, Ontario, received a speeding ticket in North Bay in February of this year.

He paid the ticket on March 3. The government cashed the cheque on March 9. However, on July 14, he received a letter from the Ministry of Transportation dated July 2, stating that his driver's licence would be suspended, effective July 23, because he had not paid his fine.

Minister, I know that at the same time as I received the information, you received the information. I've just sent over another copy in case you are completely in a daze. What are you doing about this situation?

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation):

I appreciate the question from the critic opposite. I never thought that one day I would standing in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and be expected to monitor compliance on each of 6.5 million licensees in the province, and I want to thank the member for his ultimate vote of confidence. It speaks highly of the way we do things at Transportation.

What I will do in this case, because due process has to be meticulously adhered to, is I will go to our legal department, we will take the case that has been identified by the member, we will do it in accordance with process and all parties will be pleased.

Mr Turnbull: You know, there's a word for that: It's called bafflegab. When you don't know a logical answer, you spout a whole bunch of words.

The fact is, Mr Bottomley is going to have his licence suspended tomorrow. When he phoned the court in North Bay, he was informed that the delays are due to processing in Oshawa. He was told to drive 20 miles to North Bay to present his cancelled cheque at the courthouse, and he said no, he didn't have time to do that. He has faxed you, at the same time that he faxed me, a copy of his cancelled cheque.

What have you done to fix this? We've been told that it will take a minimum of 10 days to reinstate his licence. You cashed the cheque in March, Minister. Don't sit on your hands and hide behind words. What are you going to do to fix this, and many other examples, because there are hundreds of people in this situation across the province.

Hon Mr Pouliot: I'm trying to quote verbatim what the member said. Repeatedly the member shouted across that I cashed the cheque. I want to assure the House that I never cashed a cheque.

If the events are as reported by the member, we will endeavour, inside the context of due process, to do everything so that a citizen of the province of Ontario is not shortchanged—

Mr Turnbull: Will you fix it today?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for York Mills.

Hon Mr Pouliot: —or victimized by the system in any fashion.

The Speaker: New question, the member for London South.

Mr Turnbull: Point of order, Mr Speaker: There's a citizen in this province being wronged, and my question was simply, will he fix it today?

The Speaker: No, there's nothing out of order. The member for London South.

Mr David Winninger (London South): My question is also to the Minister of Transportation.

Hon Howard Hampton (Minister of Natural Resources): Tory justice: fix the ticket, right?

Mr Turnbull: The guy has paid his ticket, you idiot.
Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for York Mills knows that that is not parliamentary language. It is not appropriate to use that type of language in reference to another member. Would the member please withdraw the remark.

Mr Turnbull: Mr Speaker, I withdraw it. I particularly withdraw any reference to an idiot. We will just—

The Speaker: No, the first two words, "I withdraw," are all that's required. Those are the magic words.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr David Winninger (London South): My question is also to the Minister of Transportation, since he gave such a convincing answer to the last question.

In my riding of London South, and I'm certain right across the province, there is a concern about road safety. We know in excess of 1,000 people die each year in motor vehicle-related accidents. Human pain and suffering are foremost among the enormous costs this represents.

Nearly half of these fatalities happen at night, and as the minister is aware, raised reflective pavement markers, often called cat's-eyes, are currently used extensively throughout the United States to enhance night visibility of lane position and direction. Does the Ministry of Transportation have plans to make Ontario highways safer by installing these high-visibility markers, and if so, when?

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Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): I'm fully appreciative of the thousand people who lose their lives on an annual basis, although I must take this opportunity, if you will bear with me for a second, to say that ours is far from a perfect record, but it is, nevertheless, one of constant improvement. We're concerned with each fatality and we're at a 40-year low at present.

There are 5,000 markers currently in use. I'll give you an example. Highway 401 and Avenue Road: Markers are effective there. There's a lot of traffic. The snowplows don't prove to be a deterrent and increase the replacement value. The fact remains that north of

the US border, we experience more difficult winter conditions. It's evident to each and every one of us. At times, it can cost as much as 10 times conventional signage, so we have to be careful whenever the delineation, meeting the standards always, is cheaper, we will do it the cheaper way. But, first and foremost, we're cognizant, we're trying to implement as many as possible keeping within budget and also looking at alternatives.

Mr Winninger: Recently you announced that Highway 407 would be extended, being built in partnership with private industry. Would this not be a good pilot project to consider the use of cat's-eye markers on it?

Hon Mr Pouliot: I cherish those moments of anxiety when people are cognizant of the politics, all politics being local, and for one of those rare moments, they're saying by the stroke of a pen, should you be able to find the money, will you help the folks back home? In this case, you've guessed it; the answer is yes, consider it done. It's no problem here.

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): My question is for the Minister of Transportation. I've just delivered to you a letter from a constituent of mine and you will find that Mrs Deborah Salsberg wrote to me about the death of her son on August 22, 1988. It happened on Highway 69 just north of the Shell station before the cutoff of 169, and I've highlighted her comments to you in that letter. The thing I'd like you to do is turn to page 2 and you'll see her statement, which says:

"Please note that I was advised to contact the regional traffic engineer in northern region re statistics of accidents occurring in the Highway 69 area before it branches off to become Highway 169.

"I've been trying for weeks to contact Mr Tom Fletcher and Mr Matt Vautour, the two men referred to me by the Ministry of Transport, to no avail. I have been unable to reach them."

Mrs Salsberg called me and I called your ministry. I have to say that they responded very quickly, and you'll see their response on the next page.

The thing that puzzles me is that when Mrs Salsberg talks about this accident, she says, "The accident occurred, a head-on collision with a pickup truck, they were returning to Toronto from cottage country, and all four people were killed." Mrs Salsberg is trying to determine how many people have been killed over the last five years in that particular area.

That is the question I asked of your officials, and if you take a look at the chart they returned to me, you'll see that under 1988 on exactly this portion of road that we were interested in, they said there have been no fatalities during that year.

Mr Minister, when we know that at least there were four fatalities—and from what I hear, there have been

a lot more because we've had lots of complaints about that particular stretch of highway—why is your ministry reporting that no one has been killed on that stretch of highway when, in fact, I have a letter from a bereaved mother whose son was one of those victims and there were four people killed in that accident alone? Could you answer that for me?

Hon Mr Pouliot: You know something? You've got me. We're talking about lives here. I am presented, with respect, through you for one of your constituents, with an opportunity to answer questions. You have dealt through the ministry. We have 9,700 loyal, dedicated employees at the Ministry of Transportation. I take these matters very, very seriously, as you do, and I thank you.

A citizen should not have to go through people "above" or people with a little push or "clout." I don't have the answer, but the next time you ask me, I can assure you I will have a much more detailed answer, because the people who have shown confidence in me deserve it.

This is a very serious matter. One party says people have lost their lives. I have a report in my hands saying that there have been no fatalities. I have to find out now about it. I've just received the inquiry, and I will do that.

Mr Kwinter: I thank the minister for that answer. I really do. But while you're investigating, will you investigate this. When my staff showed me this report, I said: "There's no way. There have obviously been some fatalities. You call them back and tell them that they must have made a mistake." They called back and they said: "We are very sorry. We do have other figures but we are not prepared to let you have them."

What kind of a response is that? They're saying, "We've given you a response that said there are no fatalities." Then, in a subsequent call, because I thought that was unacceptable given the fact that I have a constituent who was the mother of a victim, the same people who provided this information to me told me that they are sorry but they cannot give me that information.

That doesn't make any sense. We have a situation where people are being killed on that stretch of Highway 69. It is common knowledge that there are a lot of accidents. Your ministry is putting out information that for the last five years—never mind 1988; for the last five years—there has not been a fatality on that stretch of highway. When I subsequently call back, they say, "Yes, there have been fatalities, but we're not at liberty to give you that information." Do you have an answer for that?

Hon Mr Pouliot: It's the same: No, I don't. If you'll give me the names involved, obviously some work has to be done here, and, please, with your help.

I want to thank you for bringing this matter up. Needless to say, it's going to be a short walk back to the office this afternoon and I intend, with you, to go to the bottom of this.

POLICE SERVICES

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I have a question for the Solicitor General. This morning the Minister of Municipal Affairs announced in Ottawa the restructuring of the Ottawa-Carleton government. He informed four townships which I represent that he was downloading \$10 million on to those townships to pay for policing which they now receive from the OPP and are not paying directly out of property taxes. This will raise taxes from \$125 to \$200 per household in the Ottawa-Carleton area, as confirmed by the CEO of the regional capital this morning in my conversations with them.

I was told by the Minister of Municipal Affairs that you were considering doing this to all townships that had populations in excess of 5,000 across the province, and that includes 40 other townships. Are you planning to download police costs on all townships in excess of 5,000 which are receiving free OPP policing at this time?

Hon David Christopherson (Solicitor General): Mr Speaker, I'll refer that to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): At no time were the words "\$10 million" used. What we are doing and what the Solicitor General has been doing is talking to municipalities about the fact that some municipalities are paying for police protection while others of equal size are paying absolutely nothing.

What we're dealing with is a matter of fairness, and a number of the people this morning who were at the meeting said that they thought it was only right that people receive police services and pay for it the same way as the rest of the people in Ottawa-Carleton do.

We also said that there would be a phase-in process, a time, if you like, when there would be consultation and there also would be—

Mr Sterling: You are not paying for it, Ed. You are not paying for it.

Hon Mr Philip: Well, Mr Speaker, the honourable member doesn't want to hear the truth. He didn't want to this morning when he grabbed time away from the municipal councillors who wanted to ask some sensible questions.

Mr Sterling: From your lackeys in city of Ottawa council.

Hon Mr Philip: But I can say that we do have a provincial fund that we will be announcing that will assist in the phasing in of this, and the region also has, under the legislation, which he might care to read—

Interjection.

Hon Mr Philip: He obviously doesn't want an answer, Mr Speaker.

MOTIONS

MEETINGS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I move that notwithstanding standing order 96(a), the House will meet on the morning of Thursday, July 29, 1993, from 10 am to 12 noon for the consideration of government business, with routine proceedings to commence at 1:30 pm.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

1450

PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

Signed by 297 constituents. I affix my signature.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have a petition here that has been signed by over 1,500 people in Kitchener-Waterloo. The petition was organized by the three friends of the two young men who were killed in the June 15, 1993, cross-median accident on the Conestoga Parkway in Kitchener. They are Brock Cober, Rob Huber and Jonathan Weatherdon. The petition is being circulated in loving memory of the seven people who have been tragically killed on the Conestoga Expressway due to lack of sufficient median barriers.

"We, the undersigned, hereby petition the region and the province of Ontario to immediately invoke and follow the jury recommendations arising out of the death of Laurie Brain, which occurred on the Conestoga Parkway and, more particularly, for the installation of median guard rails and reconstruction of the roadway to make it safe for the travelling public of Ontario."

I am pleased to sign this petition in an attempt to

help persuade the government to build the barriers before any more deaths do occur.

GO BUS SERVICE

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows: to object to the proposed cuts to the GO Transit bus service to Stouffville and Uxbridge.

"Whereas this will be a major inconvenience to non-drivers and will substantially increase the travelling time for all of the users;

"Whereas the lack of transit services will increase traffic, thereby increasing the air pollution levels at a time when all levels of government are making an effort to reduce pollution and encourage public transportation systems;

"Whereas the cuts leave no alternative means of commuting in and out of Toronto for the individual with flexible working arrangements and child care commitments (the earliest train departs from downtown at 5:20 pm);

"Whereas it will have a negative impact on the local economy;

"Whereas the lack of GO buses will force passengers to incur extra expenses in finding and using alternative forms of transportation,

"That the government of Ontario overturn GO Transit's decision and continue the GO bus transit service to Stouffville and Uxbridge."

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Orion): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I add my name to this petition.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have a petition here that has been sent to me by the Committee of Concerned Citizens Against Bill 38.

"Re the amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act, proposed wide-open Sunday shopping and elimination of Sunday as a legal holiday:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

HEALTH CARE

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): On behalf of my colleague the member for Sarnia, who is participating in a meeting right now, I introduce a petition from the riding of Sarnia. It's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas proposals under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and delivery of health care; and

"Whereas the proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

On behalf of the constituents of the member for Sarnia, Mr Huget, I present these petitions.

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition here signed by many people from the Campbellford, Warkworth, Hastings and Castleton area to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

I have signed the petition.

HOMOLKA CASE

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have a petition that has been signed by almost 50 people in the Waterloo-Kitchener-New Hamburg-Cambridge community.

The purpose of this petition is to bring to the attention of Ontario Attorney General Marion Boyd the real outrage of the citizens of Ontario over the Judge Francis Kovacs decision in the Karla Homolka case.

Its purpose is also to let her know that she has added to their anger with her obvious disregard of the intelligence of the people of Ontario, shown by her statement, "I don't think people understand very well how the justice system operates." She does not think the public is outraged, but that there is only an angry press. This elitist attitude will not be tolerated in a Canadian or Ontario government.

It has been signed by approximately 15 people.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): I have a petition here I present on behalf of my colleague the Honourable Richard Allen. It's in regard to Sunday shopping. Constituents from the Hamilton West area have signed it. I notice there are a couple of signatures there from my own riding of Dundas and Ancaster. As I said, they are expressing their opposition to Bill 38, Sunday shopping. As with an earlier petition, I have also affixed my name in support.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the members of the Legislative Assembly.

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38. We believe that this bill defies God's laws, violates the principle of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection to workers regarding when they must work and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province.

"The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man but was created by God and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all people both physically and spiritually.

"We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

It's signed by 50 constituents. I affix my signature.

DOCTORS' FEES

Mr Wayne Lessard (Windsor-Walkerville): I have a petition that states as follows:

"The following petition is circulated in support of our

area physicians to demand the government of Ontario remove the cap imposed on their wages, not implement further restrictions.

"These cutbacks are causing this area and others in the province to be in desperate situations. The expenses of physicians are not being taken into consideration. Their exodus and the rippling effect must be stopped."

1500

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Paul Wessinger (Simcoe Centre): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That free and open collective bargaining for public service employees be restored and be returned to its honourable position in Ontario;

"The social contract in its present form be destroyed and that the valuable programs and services in the public sector be maintained for the betterment of all Ontarians;

"The government withdraw Bill 48 and in place of this bill the government work cooperatively with the public service unions to find an equitable solution rather than eliminating valuable public services."

GAMBLING

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I have a petition from the members, adherents and visitors of Kitchener East Presbyterian Church.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

BICYCLING SAFETY

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): On behalf of

my constituents in the riding of Chatham-Kent—and I just noticed this is Bill 124, the amendments to the Highway Traffic Act—I have a petition that's addressed to the Speaker of the House and the Parliament of Ontario.

"Whereas we, the undersigned, support the voluntary use of bicycle helmets, promoted as part of a comprehensive bicycle safety program;

"Whereas we, the undersigned, oppose the province's plan to mandate the use of bicycle helmets as being excessive restriction of personal rights to choose for ourselves as guaranteed under the Constitution;

"We respectfully submit this petition for your consideration."

I propose and I support the initiatives that are being put forward by these constituents.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): On behalf of 30 constituents from St Paul's United Church in the wonderful riding of Scarborough Centre:

"To the Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): Pursuant to standing order 120(b), I beg leave to present a report with respect to an appeal from the decision of the Chair of the standing committee on estimates by the majority of the members of the committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): The Speaker shall review the report just presented by the Chair of the standing committee and will advise the House at the earliest opportunity of his decision to

confirm or vary the decision of the Chair of the standing committee.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LA MUNICIPALITÉ RÉGIONALE D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

On motion by Mr Philip, the following bill was introduced for first reading:

Bill 77, An Act to amend certain Acts related to The Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton / Loi modifiant certaines lois relatives à la municipalité régionale d'Ottawa-Carleton.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? No?

All those in favour of the motion please say "aye."

All those opposed please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried. Further introduction of bills? One moment. The honourable minister has a few moments.

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): I'll only use a few moments. I wish to introduce a bill that will reform the local government in the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. This legislation is designed to give a greater regional focus to the area's governing arrangements. It proposes that regional council be directly elected, that the region be given responsibility for policing services and that it be given a new and stronger role in economic development. The changes in the electoral process would be in effect for the 1994 municipal elections.

Under this legislation, area mayors would no longer sit on regional council. A committee of provincial and municipal staff will be established to determine regional and local ward boundaries. Another committee composed of representatives of stakeholders involved with policing in Ottawa-Carleton will set the framework for the transition of regional responsibility for policing.

Members will recall that there has been extensive consultation in the Ottawa-Carleton area including three studies in the past five years, the most recent one being chaired by Graeme Kirby who issued his final report in November 1992. This legislation builds on his report and the comments which follow from that.

Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm pleased to see that some legislation is being introduced to resolve some of the differences that exist—

The Acting Speaker: I'm sorry. The honourable member—what is your point of order?

Mr Grandmaître: I'm asking for unanimous

consent to give the opposition at least five minutes because we didn't have the opportunity to be in Ottawa while the minister was making the announcement outside this House. I'm asking for unanimous consent.

The Acting Speaker: Let me ask if there's unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent to allow the opposition to speak? There is not unanimous consent. Further introduction of bills?

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I understand that the normal practice for the House is to allow the minister to speak for approximately 20 or 30 seconds to introduce the principle of the bill. This minister went far beyond that and thus avoided giving a ministerial statement.

Therefore, I put forward the argument, in support of the member for Ottawa-East, that the opposition parties be given a chance to respond, because in effect what we had this afternoon was a ministerial statement, not a statement—

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member. I have asked for unanimous consent. There is not consent to allow that to happen. We'll move on.

1510

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT ÉCONOMIQUE COMMUNAUTAIRE

Mr White, on behalf of Mr Philip, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 40, An Act to stimulate Economic Development through the Creation of Community Economic Development Corporations and through certain amendments to the Education Act, the Municipal Act, the Planning Act and the Parkway Belt Planning and Development Act / Loi visant à stimuler le développement économique grâce à la création de sociétés de développement économique communautaire et à certaines modifications apportées à la Loi sur l'éducation, à la Loi sur les municipalités, à la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire et à la Loi sur la planification et l'aménagement d'une ceinture de promenade.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Does the honourable member have some introductory remarks?

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): The Community Economic Development Act is an important part of this government's three-year, \$300-million Jobs Ontario Community Action program. Jobs Ontario Community Action is a new way of making things happen locally. It's a recognition that communities themselves are best equipped and best able to stimulate local economic activity.

It has three main thrusts: Community development is

the assist to each community in building its capacity to organize, strategize and plan for the future; community financing to help communities invest in themselves; and community capital to provide support for capital infrastructure programs identified as priorities in the planning process by those communities.

Bill 40 addresses the area of community financing.

The Community Economic Development Act provides tools to help communities invest in themselves, and it gives municipalities additional flexibility to participate directly in new ways of supporting economic development initiatives within their communities.

In our consultation, what we heard again and again is that concepts for community local development are there. Communities know what they need, but the capital to pursue them, the dollars to pursue them, is lacking. We realize that renewal and growth of local economies is often hampered by this lack of access to capital.

Interjection: It's about time somebody did something.

Mr White: It is.

Traditional financial institutions often have excessive collateral requirements, and even if financing is available, the terms offered do not meet the needs of the entrepreneurs. This lack of debt financing is almost an insurmountable barrier for those at the entry level of the economy.

Economic growth and job creation can also be hampered by a lack of access to equity financing. Many local enterprises do not meet the test of a high rate of return imposed by venture capitalists, who look for a high rate of compensation for the high risk they take. Although a small enterprise may be viable, it might not meet that test. Furthermore, it may also be costly for those enterprises to raise capital in the equity market. This legislation helps narrow that capital gap.

The legislation empowers communities to raise their own investment capital, forge new economic partnerships and work with both traditional and non-traditional sources of expertise to provide capital for entrepreneurial activities.

The legislation makes available a series of tools and mechanisms to accomplish these things. It enables municipalities to participate in the establishment of community development corporations and to support their operations. Community development corporations will be non-profit organizations operated by a board of directors that will ideally reflect the wide diversity of people and organizations in the community. The government will provide some financial assistance from Jobs Ontario Community Action to help communities set these organizations up.

Among other things, a community development corporation could sponsor the new community financing

tools that will be created through this legislation. Community loan funds and community investment share corporations are those community financing tools.

Community loan funds will give local investors a chance to support small businesses in their community. These funds will provide access to loans in the range of \$500 to \$15,000 for all types of what are called micro-enterprises: small business. Local investors who put money into these funds will have their principal guaranteed by the province.

At the larger level, the community investment share corporations will be set up by local groups. They'll provide a source of equity financing for enterprises and these community investment share corporations will benefit the community as a whole. Again, the government will guarantee the principal; not the interest or the return but the principal alone.

We plan to allocate \$10 million for community loan fund guarantees and \$20 million for community investment share guarantees. We estimate that over the next five years, 40 community investment share corporations and 35 community loan funds will become operational in communities throughout Ontario. This will help communities create some 4,000 jobs.

This legislation also contains amendments to the Municipal Act to allow municipalities to forge partnerships with the private sector, partnerships to finance facilities that benefit the entire community such as community centre complexes, water and sewage facilities, roads and transit facilities. Municipalities will also be able to make better use of pooled investment and borrowing arrangements among certain public sector institutions.

The Community Economic Development Act also includes amendments to the Planning Act that will save time and money and will contribute to economic renewal. The changes will contribute to a smoother, more efficient and effective planning and development review process.

By encouraging communities to invest in local ventures, this legislation will support strong, self-reliant local economies, and strong local economies are vitally important to the financial wellbeing of our province as a whole. We believe local communities can help lead the way to jobs, growth and economic prosperity. This legislation gives them the tools they will need to get on with the job of creating more jobs and more vital jobs in our communities.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments? If there are none, further debate? The honourable member for Ottawa Vanier.

Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East): Ottawa East; that's close enough.

Interjection: What do you think of a one-tier government?

Mr Grandmaître: One-tier government in Ottawa?

I'm dead against it. There's only one member who's for one-tier government, and that's the member for Ottawa Centre.

Today I'm addressing another very serious problem, and that's investment in our local communities, as pointed out by the member for Durham Centre. I will be very short for the simple reason that I'm expected in committee at the present time.

This is the third time I've listened to or heard the same announcement. First, it was made by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade and then the Minister of Municipal Affairs and now the member for Durham Centre, who gave us a very good explanation of what this bill is supposed to do.

It's a very complex bill because it's actually a three-pronged bill. It creates other corporations. I realize that the government is committed to spend \$300 million over the next three years: \$120 million comes from Jobs Ontario, and the additional dollars will come from 22 different programs that didn't work before. There are no new dollars in this new program.

The member pointed out that this will give municipalities and communities the tools to invest in their own future. I see it differently. I see it as the government—which is very concerned, very worried about its additional deficits, and also concerned about its credit rating—now giving communities and municipalities the power to borrow money in the name of the government, and the government will pay them back. This is what I see in Bill 40.

As pointed out by the member for Durham Centre, these two new corporations will do three things, actually: help communities build their capacity to organize community financing, help communities invest in themselves, and community capital to provide support for capital infrastructure programs. The Community Economic Development Act will help communities, as I pointed out, to invest in themselves.

1520

But I find it somewhat strange that this government is now realizing that communities can invest in themselves and do something for themselves, to borrow money and to maybe bust their municipal budget. It's okay as long as their budget or their capital dollars are not touched. I'm a little concerned that such programs, that do look good on paper, will not be totally appreciated by our municipalities in the province of Ontario.

Municipalities do need our help, and when I say municipalities need our help, they need help through unconditional grants and they need help on their conditional grants, which this government has cut back. They've cut back \$190 million in unconditional grants, and I don't have the exact figure on conditional grants, but it's close to \$275 million.

I hear the member from Durham, who has to deliver

a product today that we're supposed to buy and swallow and say this is a great thing. I don't accept this kind of proposal. I think this government is trying to rebuild its lost confidence in local communities and municipalities in this province.

There's \$30 million, if I'm not mistaken, invested in those two corporations, the community loan funds—that's part III of Bill 40—by which local investors will have a chance to support small businesses and have access to loans from \$500 to \$15,000 and the government will guarantee the principal of the local investors. The second corporation being built through this Bill 40 is the community investment share corporation; that's part II of Bill 40. These corporations will be supported by a \$30-million injection, \$10 million for the community loan fund and \$20 million for the community investment share guarantees.

Going back to what I was saying previously, this government is now realizing that it can't do it on its own. They need municipalities and communities to invest and to improve the economic climate, or the lack of the economic climate, in this province.

But I'm also concerned for people in Windsor and Chatham—even in Windsor—who were due to be part of the relocation program, which would have created jobs in those communities with less money than is being offered today.

I'm talking about money. Maybe I should ask the member for Durham Centre about the fact that \$100 million will be invested every year, and the minister of trade mentioned when she introduced the bill in the House that some communities had already applied for some of those dollars. I don't know how much money is left in 1993-94. I don't know if the member has an answer for this, but the minister said in the House that she would honour those commitments. I would like to know how much money will be invested, will be allowed to be invested, in 1993-94.

I think if this government had been serious in its first budget, we wouldn't be faced with this kind of dilemma. Right now we're asking municipalities, we're asking people in the education field, social services, to pay for the mismanagement of this government. Now they're trying to tell communities, tell municipalities, "Listen, we're sorry, but you will have to do with less."

We all agree that we have to do with less, but when you look at this program, there won't be any rush. I know the minister has said she thinks that 30 or 40 communities will be participating in this program by the end of 1994. I would like to see the list of communities that have already gotten involved in this program.

Also, I realize that the government is trying to create partnerships. We hear this word every day in the House, "partnership," and "We want to work with municipalities, we want to work with the health people, the social

services people, all of these great agencies, we want to work with these people," yet some few months ago, another bill was introduced to kill business and give unions more power in order to kill small business. I call this tokenism. Today they're trying to repair wrongs that were previously introduced in this House by introducing bills that will certainly not help municipalities and communities.

This government has a responsibility to help small communities, and I agree with the member that communities know best what is good for their communities. I think this government owes it to our municipalities, which are being dearly affected by the social contract, the expenditure control program, this government owes it to these communities to create permanent jobs, not only side jobs or semi-permanent jobs. I think this government has a lot of deep thinking to do, because by introducing legislation that is affecting our communities, this government owes it to our municipalities.

Interruption.

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): They're crying out for one-tier government.

Mr Grandmaître: Well, they must be. They must be crying out.

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): They're crying out for a new speech.

Mr Grandmaître: Then you shouldn't be sitting there.

I say that this government is too late in its approach. It should have started three years ago to work with our communities and work with our municipalities. What we're seeing today is only half a job and not a complete job.

Mr White: In response to my friend, he mentions the amount of financing that goes into this program. I think I mentioned it was \$30 million over a period of time, some \$10 million into community loan funds and \$20 million into community investment share corporations. I think that's an important investment. It's a good investment in our communities, as my friend mentioned. I'm certainly pleased at the general tenor of his remarks, that he is, like ourselves, feeling that the best way of getting jobs going, getting communities working, is by giving those individuals who are now unemployed the tools they need to get themselves into micro-businesses, and with the small and medium businesses, the share investments they need.

He mentioned how much money is going in in 1993-94, in this current fiscal year. I believe the Minister of Economic Development and Trade made a commitment to \$120 million, most of which, as my colleague mentions, are moneys that are refocused from other categories, other areas. They aren't all new moneys, but they are streamlined into Jobs Ontario Community Action. This, however, is new money and

new direction.

1530

With regard to the response he asks about in terms of the municipalities, certainly from my work and from my contact with the municipalities there's a great deal of interest. With regard to the list of municipalities, obviously until such time as the bill is passed we can't have those 35 community loan funds—those numbers of communities have expressed interest, but we can't have those funds and those corporations established until the bill is passed.

Mr Grandmaître: Mr Speaker, can I clarify something?

The Acting Speaker: Well, you've got your two-minute windup and you have to wait till that.

Are there any other members who have a wish to participate in questions and comments?

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): First of all, I want to commend the member for Ottawa East for his fine critique of this bill. I think the claim that the government is introducing this legislation to foster local economic growth is an admirable one and one we would agree with. But as usual, it is the way in which they are introducing this and the way in which they are going to try to make it work, and that of course remains always suspect, because under previous bills things just don't always work out the way they think.

I know two municipalities in my area, Port Hope and Cobourg—in fact, all of the municipalities are trying to be very fiscally responsible. The downloading and the cutbacks in the conditional and unconditional grants have been a real thorn in their sides, because they are trying to do the jobs that they must do and yet now they find themselves really restrained.

Certainly, I know, with regard to the municipality of Port Hope, the mayor expressed to me complete bafflement as to how she was going to really manage the cutbacks and exist and whether or not she should even declare bankruptcy and let the government take over. I assured her that I didn't think that was the answer.

Cobourg really, in this last month, along with the \$500,000 that it had to cut out of its budgets, or that it was going to receive under the social contract, has been ordered by MOE to build a \$1.2-million plant to deal with sludge. They just wonder how on earth they can manage it.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments?

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I've had difficulty in determining whether or not I should support this legislation on second reading, but I've come to the conclusion that we should support it on second reading because I'm quite interested in looking at different kinds of investment vehicles that may be used for commun-

ities for different kinds of purposes.

However, I'll be very much interested in hearing how people react to the control mechanisms that are put in this legislation, how in fact control is exhibited and whether it really does provide an impetus for investment in new ventures, because in this province and in Canada, particularly this province, there aren't very many venture capital corporations or venture capital sources. Therefore, I'm going to maintain, as I believe my caucus members will probably, as the critic will indicate, an open mind to looking at this. But I really do hope that when the investment community comes in, when small business comes in, when community leaders come in, they will support and clarify for me how the whole mechanism is to work to their good.

The one part I will not support is if this is vehicle for any level of government to continue borrowing at a higher rate than they are now. I will not support that.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? If there are none, the honourable member for Ottawa East has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Grandmaître: I'd like to go on record and again ask the very same question as I did to the member for Durham Centre. From my explanatory notes on this bill, of the \$300 million, \$120 million will come from Jobs Ontario Capital funds—no new funds—and also, the rest of the \$300 million will come from 22 existing programs related to community economic development.

My second question was a very simple one: How much money is left for these communities to invest in 1993-94?

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): I am delighted to comment on the community development corporation. I won't talk too much, though, about the money, the \$300 million or \$120 million, I guess, which comes from Jobs Ontario. I think the taxpayer would be delighted if all the money came from somewhere else, because frankly taxpayers are sick and tired of paying more money for more schemes.

However, what I will say is that the member for Carleton, I think, has probably put our position the best in that we will have an open mind. The Progressive Conservatives will have an open mind on this issue as it wends its way through the committee. We'd like to have certainly a number of concerns addressed, a number of questions answered, but we'll have an open mind on it.

I might say that to some degree this is similar to an initiative that the Progressive Conservatives recommended in *New Directions: A Blueprint for Economic Renewal and Prosperity in Ontario*, which is dated October 1991, the version that I have. In that *New Directions* we recommended the establishment of industrial development bonds. It appears to me that the

community development corporation is somewhat akin to that. We said that:

"Ontario needs creative solutions to generate new investment, and especially to support economic diversification in rural and regional communities. Development bonds...have proven to be an excellent vehicle in other jurisdictions to attract investment in order to create long-term employment opportunities."

I think perhaps we didn't have in mind at that time some of the same investors that the government seems to have in mind at the present time, however.

Having said we'll keep an open mind, we do have some concerns, and I hope these concerns are addressed through the committee level, concerns, for example, pertaining to the control mechanisms associated with this development corporation.

If we look, first of all, at the loan fund, the loan fund will be soliciting moneys from people within a "community." Those moneys will be distributed by a board to local business opportunities, as I understand it. That board will have the authority to distribute up to \$15,000, I think, to individual projects.

Now, that board will need to have some control, and I'm not sure what the control is, and I hope as we go through this process that that will become clear.

What are the qualifications for members to serve on the board? What sort of experience should they have?

In terms of various boards and different situations, we hear of fraud, we hear of dollars being wasted, and I think this should be of serious concern. Thought should be given to this to understand how this board operates, how it's being audited, how it's being controlled and how, essentially, public moneys are being handled. You can say, well, the moneys are coming from individual investors. The moneys are coming from people in the community who are putting this money forward to be invested back in their own community. However, the boards do have an obligation to steward that money in trust for the community, and that's a serious obligation.

In addition, if the loans are defaulted, if the loans are not repaid, then the province is on the hook, the taxpayers of this province are on the hook, to make up the difference. Consequently, the taxpayers have a right to know the standards, the qualifications, the controls of people involved in giving out these loans and ensuring that there is success.

1540

Another issue I want to raise is that the loan funds will operate two accounts, as I understand it: an operating account and a capital account. Out of the capital account will come the loans for the businesses within the community that will, hopefully, use those loans to create jobs and to be successful. Out of the operating side, the moneys will cover salaries, rents, office expenses. What sort of controls are there on the sal-

aries? What sort of controls on rents, office expenses and those kinds of expenditures, bearing in mind again that, in the final analysis, it is the taxpayers of the province of Ontario who stand behind the monetary success of the loan fund? I think that's a question that needs to be addressed.

The loans will be given to applicants who meet certain tests. Business applicants within the community must satisfy certain tests. The first test is rather interesting. The first test, as I understand it, is that they must prove that a traditional institution—and here I guess we're talking about a bank or a trust company or some traditional institution that would loan funds to a business—has refused to lend money to this business. Normally when that happens, of course the reason is because the risk is too great.

So I think that highlights even more the importance that there are adequate controls, because we are talking about business ventures that have been turned down by a bank for a loan, that have been turned down by a trust company or another organization, presumably because the risk is too great. If the risk is great, then all the more need for controls.

There has to be a business plan, a plan to show that the business will operate successfully and will be able to repay the money to the loan corporation within a period, I believe, of about three years. Now, again, we need qualified people to be able to assess that and to be able to determine whether or not that's possible; all the more reason, again, why we need to know controls, qualifications etc.

Perhaps I'll shift now to the community investment share corporation. I think it's been explained earlier there are really two corporations involved. One is a loan fund which will accept moneys from within the community and lend that money out to a small business, up to \$15,000. The second vehicle is what's called a community investment share corporation. That corporation will operate on the basis of sale of preferred shares. You essentially buy shares in that corporation and you'll hold those shares for a period of time, perhaps up to seven years. At a predetermined time, as long as seven years, then you will be able to cash in those shares.

Again, the shares are guaranteed by the taxpayers of the province of Ontario, so if anything goes wrong, if the investments go wrong—and the investments here are greater than with the loan corporation; the investments here, indeed, in certain circumstances can exceed half a million dollars—then it will be the taxpayers of the province of Ontario who will foot the bill.

Again, it points out the need for the board that will be involved in assessing the share corporation, determining the validity of the business plan that'll be brought forward, that'll be assessing the risk of the business ventures. It's so important that there be controls, that

there be standards and qualifications for the people who will be serving in this capacity.

I'll shift to one other concern that I have that I think should be addressed. Through the share corporation, a loan of no more than 40% can be made to a particular business venture. If the business venture, for example, is of the order of \$100,000, then no more than \$40,000 could be invested through the share corporation. However, the individuals, the proponents of the business themselves, will be compelled to put in 25%—in the case of a \$100,000 business venture, \$25,000—and the remainder of the money will have to come from other sources.

I think we should take a second look at the balance involved in that sort of funding arrangement. Is a 25% share for the proponents adequate when one considers that the community and ultimately the taxpayer, who is backing up this investment, are asked or at least are able to put up to 40% of the investment in this corporation? Is that a suitable balance? Should the proponents put more money up front and ask the community perhaps not to put up quite as much?

I think a second look needs to be taken at that. It certainly puts more of the community's money in jeopardy at that rate.

Getting down to the final couple of points, the definition of a business that can qualify, as I understand it, although not perhaps fully determined at this point, indicates that the business must be destination tourism, manufacturing and processing and information or telecommunications and technology. So we're talking about tourism, manufacturing or telecommunications.

The main thrust of this proposal, as I understood it, was to assist particularly in rural communities. I don't think anybody really feels the takeup in the large urban centres will be very great. I think we're looking at the smaller communities. I think that's the history of this kind of concept in the United States, for example. It's mostly the smaller rural communities.

I have to ask myself, if we're looking at tourism, if we're looking at manufacturing, if we're looking at telecommunications, are these the kinds of industries, are these the kinds of uses that will be predominant in a rural setting? Somehow I think the definition is out of whack. In a rural setting, we may be talking about more of a commercial type of venture, perhaps a feed store or something of that nature and, as I understand it, under the present definition that may not qualify. So I think we have some work to do in that regard.

I think rightfully in this bill municipalities have been constrained in terms of their investment. I believe that's a good thing because they would certainly be under a lot of pressure in terms of putting money into a venture like this. As we've heard, these ventures will be at a higher risk than any other lending institution would

accommodate, so I think it's right that the municipalities have been limited in terms of their financial involvement. But municipalities are put in the place of perhaps sponsoring these investment opportunities. I have to question how the working relationship will be with the province of Ontario, and I think this needs some investigation.

The municipalities will be in the position of promoting it in the first instance, whereas the provincial government will be responsible for picking up the tab at the end of the day if the venture fails. One wonders about the accountability of one government instituting a business venture and another government being stuck with the tab if it fails. I think that's a question that needs to be addressed, to see if it makes sense the way it's set up.

1550

One last comment is that in addition, in terms of the municipalities' position in this, they will be put in a position perhaps of encouraging their local constituents to be involved in a business venture. They will perhaps be put in a position of trying to drum up support for a business venture that would be at a higher risk than normal. I'm just wondering what happens if the investors are not happy with the way this turns out, how this reflects on the local municipalities. I think we should have some discussion in that regard as this goes through committee, because it could put the municipalities in an awkward situation vis-à-vis their local communities.

With those comments, I'll say that we do have an open mind on it. We have a lot of concerns, and I guess that's what the committee is there for, to address those concerns and answer those questions. But personally, at any rate, I'm prepared to see this go through to the committee and to work with it.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?

Mr White: I want to thank my colleague from Don Mills for his very well articulated speech, his many concerns, and I look forward to working with him in committee in dealing with some of those issues. Some of them are very viable concerns.

I would reflect on a couple of them at this moment. The community development corporations would probably be the bodies that would initially sponsor those other organizations. The community development corporation might be something that the municipality would be involved in, or it might be something emerging from the community; it might be in the nature of a cultural group or whatever.

That group—and we have seen that already with the city of Burlington, which has a community development project—would then sponsor or initiate something, the community loan fund group or the community investment share corporation, make information available, and

I would imagine that it would be from that initial impetus that you would find some of the members of the board of directors. My friend mentioned particularly the concern with the community loan fund organizations.

Some of those people would come from our local communities, and we are talking about some risk involved, risk both there and with the community investment share corporations. I'm sure that risk would be mediated by the very fact that with some of these groups, the people's own moneys are significantly invested in those areas. They of course want a decent return in those areas. As my friend knows, it's very difficult these days just to ensure ongoing loans when banks are pulling in loans on the basis of collateral not being of the same value it was, say, two years ago.

I look forward to working with my colleague in committee on this bill and to further of his comments.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments?

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): I would just like to comment about the understanding of the manufacturing in rural Ontario. I'm a rural member who represents a wide—and I took exception when you said about grain feeds. We're not talking about funding stables here, we're talking about telecommunication, and Smart Talk Network has just said that in the next 18 months they'll be hiring another 200 people in the city of Chatham, which is a rural community.

We talk about the rural contributions around ethanol. We're also looking into the production of corn and using it in car fuel as a major initiative that's going on in our communities. We look at fish farms, which are a very important aspect of replenishing our lakes, plus the marketplace. Food processing is a very key element to rural communities.

I know I've had great conversations with a lot of people in my community just dealing with the manufacturing sector, dealing with bridge financing for those tool and die industries that are out there that cannot obtain bridge financing right now from ODC or any other cooperation. So this is a plus. I believe that when you talk about investment, yes, you have to spend a little money to make a little money, and there is generation of economic prosperity in our communities that will be very essential to them.

I just hope that we can move expeditiously through the committee process and expeditiously through third reading of this legislation, which will allow our communities, which have community dollars and don't mind investing their own money in their own community, to entice those around the telecommunication technology base that would be there, around the manufacturing opportunity that's there. Navistar is another prime example that is contributing in our community.

Plus around our agricultural base, because our agricultural is a high risk. When I heard the member from this side talk about the banks, the banks are not very friendly to high-risk. They might be high-risk for a short period of time, but there's gainful opportunity there and we must address that high-risk aspect also for our manufacturing and our agricultural communities.

I would just like to say thank you for the compliments, but rural Ontario is more than the banking corporations that are there.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Don Mills has two minutes to make a response.

Mr David Johnson: I thank the member for Durham Centre and the member for Chatham-Kent for their comments on my comments. I will say that the member for Chatham-Kent raised the prospect of fish farms; I think it was one of the examples he presented. Now, maybe that's allowed somehow under the definition in this bill, but it's not immediately obvious to me how that particular application, which could well be a good application, fits under the definition of this bill. Perhaps I'll see that as it goes through committee.

The member for Chatham-Kent also mentioned that banks are not particularly happy with high-risk applications. There's a pretty good reason for that, because at the end of the day banks, being a private business, have to make a profit. If they don't make a profit, they're out of business. That's the way the economy rolls.

There's a kind of a message there, that if there's not money to be made, then I hope we simply don't redirect all of those sorts of applications where there isn't money to be made, to the public sector, and consider the public purse, the taxpayers' purse, in the province of Ontario to be the method of funding. I know that there has been some history of success of these sorts of corporations in the United States, so I'm going into this with an open mind and I hope there is going to be some merit in it.

It is also interesting to me to note that the bill is Bill 40. I hadn't thought of that before, but whenever I think of Bill 40 I think of the labour bill. Here's a new Bill 40. What we need to be focusing on is job creation in many different concepts, not just through corporations like this but every way we can promote jobs. The previous Bill 40 killed a whole lot of jobs in the province of Ontario. It's just ironical that the two have the same number.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on this bill which I hope will have some positive effect on the many communities in our province that have been hit hard by unemployment and economic dislocation, not the least of those communities being the city of St Catharines and the surrounding area in the Niagara

region.

I happen to sit on a coalition that is put together of people from business and labour, the political scene and the community, which has been wrestling for some period of time with the major announced layoffs at General Motors and their consequences for the Niagara region, and indeed even into Hamilton. There's been representation from all of those areas. They are reaching out to endeavour to find ways to revitalize our communities.

I am a person who is not prepared to write off the older industries that exist in this province. I know that it's in vogue these days to say that we should be moving into the new high-tech industries, that we should be moving into information-related industries and those which, in my view, don't always produce so many jobs. The jobs they do produce are often high-paying, but there's a lot of competition in that field.

1600

I understand there's a need to be moving in that direction. What I am concerned about is that as the gurus of economics and competition talk about moving into these new areas, they seem almost prepared to abandon some of the traditional industries upon which Ontario has relied for its employment and its economic vitality over the years.

I speak parochially and I guess with a good deal of emotion about the automotive industry in the Niagara Peninsula, and the steel industry which is in Hamilton and Nanticoke and other parts of Ontario, of course, but speaking on a regional and parochial basis, Welland also has an industry which is related to steel.

Many of us feel we can't simply abandon those industries and say that while they have produced a lot of economic impact in the past and that the job opportunities have been there, particularly for people who might not otherwise have access to high-paying jobs, somehow we should now abandon those and look in new directions. Yes, I believe we should, and perhaps some of the financing that might be available under the auspices of this bill may be able to help us move in that direction. At the same time, I urge the government and other members of the Legislature not to abandon the traditional heavy industries which have been good for this province and have provided good job opportunities for so many.

We in St Catharines have been hit with the announcement of the closing of the foundry and a shutdown of one of the parts of the engine plant. In addition to that, we have been hit with the news that the axle plant on Ontario Street in St Catharines is going to be sold and there is a possibility, if a buyer is not found, that in fact it will be closed down. In addition to the 750 indefinite layoffs which were announced in March 1992, this would mean close to half the operation of General Motors in St Catharines would no longer be there at the

end of this period of time. Those of us who represent the Niagara region are simply not prepared to accept that.

I found it disconcerting. At the risk of appearing to be partisan, but simply pointing out, the problem with being prepared to abandon industries or to fall into the new thinking: When the Premier visited St Catharines and discussed with local people, I think it was in August of last year, the shutdown of the foundry, he sounded an awful lot like George Peapples, I would have thought, the president of General Motors in Canada, who would make a strong business case for not continuing with operations which were not essential to the company.

I know that subsequent to newspaper reports, the Premier issued a retraction. However, there is something called a tape recorder which has been very difficult on politicians who try to indicate that they're misquoted.

My concern was that when the Premier was there, he lectured certain people about the fact that you have to face reality, that jobs are gone, that corporations are losing money and that they have to make these major changes, and, "Don't you understand that?" The Premier is not alone in that. I certainly don't place the onus on him alone. There are many people. He's echoing what many, particularly in the business community, are saying.

Someone once referred to it—I don't know why the terminology; someone might tell me someday—as crackpot realism that we see. They referred to that once in another context and I didn't know whether that was particularly unflattering or not. There was this kind of realism that is put before us.

But what it does, it seems to me, is that it gives a message to General Motors that the Ontario government may be prepared to throw in the towel; that is, to accept the fact that General Motors has some difficult decisions to make and that therefore they would be accepted. I'm sure the Premier would not want it to be portrayed that way. I'm sure that's not the message he wanted to get out to the industry itself. I simply talk about it as a consequence when the Premier of a province makes this kind of concession publicly.

He might well make it privately to people he's trying to motivate to move in different directions, but a public declaration of that kind, unfortunately, has the effect on General Motors. It's not necessarily the overwhelming effect, but it's one of the factors they'll take into consideration. So I hope that is well behind us now and that we're moving in a different direction.

I'm part of this coalition, as I mentioned, and it's supported by all the local members who joined in a conference we had at the CAW hall in St Catharines last year, and there have been subsequent meetings and conferences under the auspices of the regional govern-

ment and other organizations. There is no question that communities such as the one I represent are in need of some kind of financial assistance that senior levels of government can provide.

For those of us who represent the Niagara region, it's been difficult over the years to make the case. Unfortunately, senior levels of government—I'm talking now of the federal and provincial governments—have looked upon the St Catharines-Niagara area, despite our unemployment figures, as being part of the Golden Horseshoe, an area which has been rich in financing and rich in industry and has created a lot of jobs. But as all of us who represent the Niagara region know, we have been perhaps the tarnished end economically of the Golden Horseshoe for some period of time.

What we all strive for is to get the recognition of senior levels of government that our part of the province is in need of some special assistance that would be helpful in rejuvenating it, revitalizing it, bringing back the economic base that was there at one time.

Again, though I see some problems with the legislation, I am hopeful, and I want to be hopeful and optimistic, that at least some of the initiatives that might be forthcoming from this may have a small impact on my community. Several small impacts can be positive for a community such as mine.

I know, however, that when we talk about new money—I recognize as well as anyone that there isn't a lot of new money out there. I make that case to a lot of people and it's not easy for an opposition person to make that case to people. The easy, political thing to do, and I've watched it over the years—did I watch it over the years—from others who have said that the government should spend more money on this and that. I've made the case to people who ask for it, "Are you (a) prepared to pay more money, (b) prepared to see another service cut, or (c) prepared to see the government borrow more money?"

I simply note that where we want to bring in municipalities as partners, they're going to be strained for more cash because the provincial government is not going to provide the anticipated amount of funding for this year in terms of conditional and unconditional grants, because the province has bailed out of several areas for financial reasons, just as the federal government has bailed out of several areas for financial reasons.

It's going to be more difficult for the local municipalities to find those funds to participate in these initiatives as they might have hoped to do. Now, a rebound of the economy may be helpful in that regard. As I indicated earlier this week in the House, one of my concerns about the rebound in the economy is that it will be held back, if not stopped—I prefer to think perhaps held back than stopped—by several significant tax increases, some of which came into effect on July 1 of this year.

I also want to deal with an issue, and it's less of an issue in this particular case, of who controls the money and who is on these agencies, boards and commissions and what axe they have to grind. I think it's going to be important to have the right people on this, people who have the interest of the community, who have good business sense, because there's no use throwing money at a bad project.

Yes, you have to be, I guess, a bit less cautious than the banks and, heaven knows, the banks aren't noted for providing much in the way of risk capital unless it's for very rich people or rich corporations. I sometimes think the federal House of Commons has a minefield there to deal with if it could ever get at banks. That would be something I'd be very interested in some day, getting at the fact that the banks don't lend a lot of money out at certain times.

If you're operating a clothing store at this time and everybody says, "Isn't it nice the rates are low?" just try to get any money out of the banks when the rates are low. They're happy to lend the money to you when the rates are high; not so happy to lend the money to you when the rates are low. We see very low inventory in businesses such as clothing businesses. Sometimes those people think that at least they can get the money when there are high interest rates, not that they're asking for them.

All of this financing is going to be quite difficult. There's not a lot of money out there and there's not a lot of confidence in investment in a lot of areas, and that includes Ontario for a variety of reasons. I don't want to get into the partisan end of that; just to leave it at that. There's not a lot of confidence in investing in many areas in this country and Ontario is one of them.

1610

I want to get back to the point of the control of elected people as opposed to the control of non-elected people. It's a trend I'm seeing all over, I must say, and Ontario is certainly no exception there.

I mentioned on the OTAB legislation, again, an enviable goal, people working hard on that, trying to get retraining going—but there we see a 22-person board which has an awful lot of power, and it's in the interests of the people of this province and certainly in the interests of the members of this Legislature to have as much control as possible over policy, over programs, over practical—well, not so much over practical, day-to-day decisions, but the setting of the policy and the financing.

I see governments all over, and this government is certainly moving in that direction, putting things off to crown agencies over which you have not much control. There's a lot of money out there being controlled by those crown agencies. There are a variety of reasons for doing that. Some of the reasons are quite positive in terms of governments genuinely believe that certain

corporations can function better than if something is a department of government. But there's another agenda there that we're all aware of and it's simply the agenda which says, "Let's get it off the central books and fob it off to various crown corporations and then it will look as though our deficit is lower."

I happen to believe it's more important for the elected people to control all of these things, all of these expenditures, than it is to have non-elected people doing so. I have noted in my 16 years and one month in this Legislature—almost two months—a diminishing of the role, a diminishing of the responsibility and a diminishing of the power of elected members of this assembly for a variety of reasons. One of them relates to the changes that have been made in terms of rules in the House, not simply the last change, but some of the other changes that have been made as well.

In addition to this, it is what we're talking about here this afternoon, and that is more and more the civil service taking control, the special agencies taking control and the political gurus who hang around every Premier's office—regardless of what the party happens to be, and they all have them—who want to have control over how things are spent.

I've said in the Legislature before, in the last couple of weeks and perhaps on other occasions, that we're the only people the population can get at. They can't get at others directly; they can have at least some influence on us. When they phone our constituency offices, when they write to us, when they encounter us on the street, we all bring back to our colleagues the dialogues which we engage in on those occasions. Sometimes, within a government caucus, they have the opportunity to get into full revolt with the cabinet and bring the cabinet into line, and that's happened with every party, I'm sure this party as well, and in opposition you get a chance to share those thoughts.

I hope in this particular case that the appointments that are made to the agencies or the boards, or the directors who control these expenditures, are responsible people to the public at large, as we are, as opposed to special-interest groups. That is something else that's happening in our democracy in North America: watching special-interest groups take control.

I used to listen to the statement, "You can't fight city hall." You know, sometimes city hall is right. Sometimes city hall is protecting the interests of the population at large. The person who has a particular problem with city hall may be right or may be wrong, but there's an assumption on the part of, say, the CBC, Sunday Morning or something like that, that those people are automatically right and that city hall is wrong, or that someone who has a grievance with the provincial government is right and the minister happens to be wrong. Sometimes the minister is right. In fact, often the minister is right and has to protect the general

interests of the public. I think that's something that we as a Legislature are going to have to address in some time to come.

I want to deal with certain other aspects of this bill. Again, at the risk of sounding partisan—and that's always a risk in this Legislature, although it was never anything that held anybody else back over the years—I will just express the hope that the money isn't doled out to friends and sympathizers of the government. I think that if the boards are properly composed, that won't happen.

We get these faxes every day in our constituency offices—why, I don't know—on all the Jobs Ontario grants that are given out, and I'll tell you, when I look at some of the allocations in that regard, if they aren't friends of the government getting some allocations, I'd be very surprised. But there are a lot of good allocations as well, so it would be unfair to simply characterize the whole program that way.

But I think that's important. You have to watch out for those things, that governments—plural, generically speaking—don't simply reward their friends and their supporters with something that isn't very economically viable.

It's hard for the Minister of Environment, for instance—and let me tell you what the Minister of Environment has to wrestle with—to deal with some of the great ideas people have to save the environment. Again, you can get the public pressure on. I remember being in a major clash with somebody who was in the oil refining business, and the person certainly managed to get vengeance on me on one occasion by lying on national television, but that happens from time to time, I guess, when you're confronted with these situations.

It's easy to throw money at some of these projects which sound good, but you always have to remember that it's the taxpayers' money you're throwing at these projects, and if they don't have a good business plan—you don't hear me get up in the House and condemn the government when it doesn't finance some of these bizarre initiatives that are brought forward, because there are some bizarre ones, and they come to the opposition and say, "You know, the government is missing a grand opportunity." Well, having had an opportunity to serve in government for over five years, I know that some of those opportunities aren't as good for the taxpayer at large or the province as they might be, so I'm sympathetic when ministers are confronted publicly with this, and I admire them when they don't simply throw money at it. Financial circumstances today hardly allow a minister to throw money at anything any more, so I guess that's one option that's diminishing.

I want to also deal with—and it may not be so much in this bill, but it's bordered on in this bill—municipal incentives. There are a lot of municipalities, probably including my own, which have proponents of allowing

municipalities, as they do in the United States, to be able to offer great deals to businesses and industries to come into their area.

I'm opposed to that. I know that goes against what a lot of people think, but the only loser in that regard is the taxpayer, because the competition gets very, very great. As that competition increases, with the tax incentives that are provided, either taking away the tax altogether or providing great infrastructure and so on, that just becomes a bidding war, and the only winners are the people who are running those companies and nobody else. I suppose there's a spinoff effect, but there's a great price to be paid, and remember who has to pick up the slack: When somebody's not paying taxes, somebody else has to pay taxes. So I hope the government isn't contemplating letting municipalities get into a bidding war with one another and, even more difficult, a bidding war with the United States for industries. I would just hope the United States would abandon that, as opposed to those of us in Ontario moving in that direction.

There was mention this afternoon of the agriculture business, and that's high-risk, but there's an area where I think there's some opportunity for people. We often think of agriculture as somehow not an industry or not a business, that it's somehow different: It's called farming and it's something different. Well, in fact of course it's a major industry in this province and has been for years. It's a business. A person running a farm is running a business, and it seems to me that if we can assist businesses in maintaining their operations or initiating new operations, we are doing something positive for the province.

I happen to believe that it is not our responsibility to feed the people of Ontario alone, or indeed the people of this country alone; that we who have the benefit of good agricultural land, of some favourable climatic conditions, of some excellent farmers, of some equipment which has allowed us to be very competitive and productive, should be providing food for other parts of the world. It is good for business, quite obviously: You're able to sell that food. But also, I think it is a bit of a moral responsibility we have to our fellow women and men across this globe, so I'm pleased that mention has been made of the possibility of some agricultural businesses being able to take advantage of the provisions of this bill.

When we get into Planning Act amendments—I looked at these, and they appear to be pretty innocuous. I'm always very cautious about Planning Act amendments. There are many people out there, I'm sure, who would like to fire some darts in my direction for doing that, because there's a very strong lobby out there to bulldoze government aside, particularly the Ministry of Environment. If you want to see them sharpening their knives, just watch the coalition of people, who often try

to use environmental names or community-sounding names, out to elbow aside the Ministry of Environment.
1620

The Ministry of Environment's obligations are to protect not only the immediate circumstances that people will be living in but the long-term situation facing people. I have watched pressure being put on the Ministry of the Environment to rush through approvals. There's not so much of that now because we're in a pretty deep recession, but when times were booming, I can tell you there was an awful lot of pressure and an awful lot of annoyance with the Ministry of the Environment.

But it seems to me that many of these planning mechanisms are there for good reason. I watch with interest the assault now on the Niagara Escarpment Commission, for instance. A lot of enemies of the Niagara Escarpment Commission and what it's stood for over the years are mounting a major offence against it. I hope the government will stand up against that offence.

I was a bit disappointed that Mr Sewell, in his commission, did not deal with the Niagara Escarpment Commission. He was before the government agencies committee and indicated on that occasion that it really wasn't within his mandate. But with the thinking that he has on that commission, I would have been encouraged if he and his fellow commissioners had in fact made some specific comments, because the five-year review plan which took place within the Niagara Escarpment Commission certainly didn't offer me optimism that the reviewing officers were particularly sympathetic to maintaining the integrity of the Niagara Escarpment. I know there are a lot of municipal people who are unhappy with that. I notice that there's an opportunity for municipalities to have more power, and in some cases they have the wherewithal and the concern.

Whether you like the government that's in power at any specific time or not, one thing about the province is that it's objective. Local municipalities are not. In many municipalities there are people at the local level who would like to pave every last centimetre of the land, and they'd say that's progress: "Here we are, we don't have development on this five inches of land. Let's get some development in there. Let's bulldoze something down."

I think the provincial government is less subject to the kind of pressures that are faced by local governments, and that's why I'm always a bit queasy when I see the provincial government yielding to local governments more powers within the planning decisions. If there are official plans, if there are provincial statements that are there and the option for the province to intervene, I suppose that can be helpful, because it means the province doesn't have to hire as many employees to deal with the various applications that come before it. But I do want to share with members of the Legislature

a concern that we could see a weakening of that.

I've mentioned in the House Project X, which some of you, when you were running as candidates, may have remembered. Certainly the Globe and Mail and the CBC and others were very interested in this at one time. It was a potential catastrophe when the cell within the Ministry of Treasury and Economics, the Ministry of Finance—if they are watching this—I doubt it; they must have better things to do, but if they're watching this, they would resent the word "cell," but that's exactly what it is, a cell within the Ministry of Treasury and Economics that is there to make sure that the Ministry of Environment doesn't spoil the economy of the province; and their desire to listen to certain people who have a vested interest in bulldozing over the planning rules in this province and speeding everything up because that will be progress, because that will be economic vitality for the province. There's a group within that ministry which is interested in that, and other ministries of this government.

I was very saddened because I thought, of all governments, an NDP government would resist that. I had more confidence, frankly, because that's the kind of issue that the NDP has fought for. Certainly in opposition they were very, very strong in fighting Project X. But I saw an announcement made by the Minister of Municipal Affairs at the time, Dave Cooke as opposed to Ed Philip—I use their names because I want to differentiate between them—an announcement that in effect seemed to me to be the implementation of project X. Then I see the water corporation taking over and that leaving the Ministry of Environment, where there are at least some controls.

I simply alert members of the Legislature to that possibility, particularly the government backbenchers or frontbenchers who are not in the cabinet. I don't like that terminology. To the government members who are not in the cabinet, I particularly alert those people to keep the cabinet on its toes. The cabinet listens a lot to civil servants, many great people there who make some excellent recommendations, and to political gurus—if that's the plural of guru. They listen to those people. A lot of the recommendations which are made nobody knows about.

You have to look at their ramifications, if I can just give one. I appreciate the Speaker's indulgence of my wandering a bit on this, but if I can speak of one, it would be where people want to build on old dump sites or next to old dump sites. Everybody says: "Oh, that's great. There's no problem, no methane gas." Then of course there's a big problem that arises and millions of dollars have to be spent to rectify those problems. I can think of one particularly in Durham where that was a circumstance. You end up hoeing the soil out and so on when people are allowed to build on dumps or next to dumps.

So the Ministry of Environment isn't being difficult just to be mean or just to exercise power; it is doing it to defend the environmental interests of the province. I hope when these changes are made that they don't represent a beginning of the end of provincial control and power in this field, that it isn't simply a yielding to the municipalities for three reasons: first, to make the development industry happy, because of course the development industry can produce a lot of jobs; second, to make municipal politicians happy; and third because it's a good way of not having to spend money.

I would normally be critical of a fee structure I see in here because I would see it as another tax. The only reason I'm not critical of it in this particular instance when the province applies those is that it allows the province to get some revenues in so that it's allowed to have sufficient staff to deal with various matters, particularly approvals and environmental assessment. While nobody likes those, and I don't like them either, at least I can express an understanding of why governments would want to have those, because there will be people who directly benefit from development. Those people will have to invest some of their money—not too much, I hope, but some of their money—in helping to pay for those officials who will carefully scrutinize, I would hope, each and every plan that comes forward.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this. I hope it will be helpful to the Niagara region, if I can be parochial on this occasion, the Hamilton-Niagara area. I hope it will produce jobs, allow areas to diversify in terms of their economics; without forgetting the existing industries are there, allow them to diversify. I hope it will provide some source of optimism to well-meaning people within a community who believe that they can come forward with an idea that can receive some financing that might not otherwise be available from the banks.

Mr White: Just a couple of brief comments in response to my colleague's queries in regard to the amendments to the Planning Act. There are a number of amendments to the Planning Act that are included in this legislation. They are quite—I shouldn't say numerous, but there are almost a dozen of them. They are an attempt, I believe, to speed up the process in terms of referral of matters to the Ontario Municipal Board: what is referred, how these things are dealt with. I think my friend will acknowledge that while there are some endeavours and some efforts to speed things up, there is not a substantive abrogation of people's rights or of the rights of environmental concerns. It is a matter really of making government work better.

1630

There is the issue, for example, of the Ontario Municipal Board, which can make decisions on consents for minor variances without going through a full process. There is a request that municipalities forward

appeals to the OMB within a period of some 15 days. So the process is sped up to some degree. The Ontario Municipal Board can also partially approve zoning bylaws. For those parts of the bylaws that are not under appeal, not under scrutiny, those portions can be approved. So those areas can be dealt with and development can occur.

These issues I don't think are in much contention and I think are all strongly recommended by the provincial facilitator, who has done an excellent job, I believe, in speeding up some significant areas of development, including even in my friend's area in Niagara region.

The Acting Speaker: The member for St Catharines has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Bradley: I guess what I find a bit amusing is to hear Dale Martin's name mentioned as a facilitator. I think Dale Martin made his reputation in Metropolitan Toronto and the city of Toronto by stalling developments and blocking developments. So I suppose it was perhaps a stroke of genius to appoint Dale to this particular position, outside of the fact he's a supporter of the New Democratic Party, because he's figured out every possible way there is to block any developments. So perhaps he would be able to assist municipalities in that regard.

The member is correct in assuming that my concerns are not so much about what I see contained here in terms of the changes in the Planning Act, because a quick glance at them makes them look pretty innocuous; what I was concerned about was that you'll find this in this bill, and if you keep finding these changes in a variety of bills, you'll find that things will move very quickly but they may not move in the best interests of the environment.

I think that planned development, effectively controlled development, well-thought-out development, is very helpful to our province, but I must tell you that when I go down the Queen Elizabeth Way from Toronto to St Catharines and back, I see something that I don't consider to be progress, when I look at a number of businesses which have now taken over all the farm land all the way around. It used to be a beautiful sight and it used to be a very lucrative business in terms of farming. I look now at warehousing, which produces very little in the way of jobs and not very much in the way of a beautiful sight out there. So I hope we don't go headlong in the opposite direction in trying to accommodate the development industry in this province.

The Acting Speaker: Does the honourable member for Durham Centre wish to make a concluding remark?

Mr White: A very short concluding note, and that is simply to thank my colleagues for their support and interest in this legislation, which I think is very important and innovative. It will be a major tool in terms of facilitating community economic development. It will

allow municipalities to participate in a way in which they have never been able to before. It will allow funds to become available for micro-business, for people who are presently unemployed to get themselves on to their feet and at work. It will allow some important investment in their futures. It also allows for small and medium-sized businesses to receive some equity shares and for full participation in community development, community planning, community strategizing.

These are things which I look forward to discussing in committee with my colleagues. There are also, as my friend from St Catharines noted, some amendments to the Planning Act. They are pretty well innocuous, as he mentioned, and they will also be discussed to some degree in committee.

The Acting Speaker: Mr White, on behalf of the minister, has moved second reading of Bill 40.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?
Carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Mr White: I move that the bill be referred to the standing committee on general government.

The Acting Speaker: The bill has been ordered for the committee on general government.

PUBLIC SERVICE STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE LA FONCTION PUBLIQUE

Mr Charlton moved third reading of Bill 169, An Act to amend the Public Service Act and the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la fonction publique et la Loi sur la négociation collective des employés de la Couronne.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the honourable minister have some opening remarks?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet and Government House Leader): Yes, I do, Mr Speaker. Thank you, and I'll be very brief.

Bill 169 essentially serves two main purposes. First, it confirms that the government of Ontario has the sole responsibility to decide who is a crown employee, a public servant or a civil servant. It will specifically prevent third-party tribunals from assigning government employee status to employees of transfer agencies.

Secondly, the legislation ensures that the government will continue to be able to manage responsibly the growth and cost of the public service in this province. This will eliminate the confusion and large costs that can occur when tribunals declare public sector workers to be direct government employees.

The issue of government having the ability to determine who is the employer is a long-standing one. In the past, a number of quasi-judicial tribunals have declared

employees in the broader public sector to be direct employees of the provincial government. More recently, employees in some public sector agencies were forced to seek rulings from the pay equity tribunal that they were provincial government employees for the purpose of gaining access to pay equity.

Bill 102, An Act to amend the Pay Equity Act, which became law on July 1, 1993, contains complementary amendments to Bill 169. Bill 102 extends pay equity to an estimated 420,000 women in the broader public and private sectors. By introducing the two new methods of job comparison, this bill will eliminate the need for public sector employees to seek government-as-employer declarations, as they're only a means of achieving non-discriminatory pay rates.

It is true, and I acknowledge, that some unions have concerns about this legislation, Bill 169, and we have made sincere efforts to meet those concerns. One of the most cited objections to Bill 169 was the fear that it could create a class of public sector employees who would be denied the right to organize and bargain collectively under either the Ontario Labour Relations Act or the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act. The reforms to CECBA recently introduced in Bill 49 include a clause that formally states that the Ontario Labour Relations Act binds the crown. This is a further clarification that the employees who are not considered crown employees under CECBA will have access to the provisions of the Ontario Labour Relations Act.

Bill 169 does not take away rights from public sector workers. It does, however, recognize the responsibility of government to control the size and the cost of the public service in this province.

Similarly, this legislation will not remove women's access to pay equity. Instead, Bill 169 and Bill 102, which through a large part of the legislative process we dealt with as a package, recognize that access to pay equity should be extended to as many women as possible in a fair and equitable manner and not through the mechanism of a legal loophole.

The Acting Speaker: Questions or comments. Seeing none, further debate.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): As the critic of Management Board, I've had carriage of Bill 169 since it was tabled for first reading in December 1991. At the time when it was presented for second reading approval in principle I supported the legislation in principle because of the need for government to be able to designate and to manage.

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Although I supported it in principle at that time, I said very clearly that I would have preferred to have seen this issue dealt with as part of reforms to the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act. I am persuaded that Bill 169 as it stands today, with the

Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act before us in the form of Bill 49, suggests that Bill 169 should not go forward in its present form alone, that in fact this is not a piece of legislation that should be carried by the Chairman of Management Board and dealt with separately from the reforms of the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act. Bill 49 has carriage by the Minister of Labour, and that has added to tremendous confusion and upset by those people who follow legislative proceedings.

One of the things I have learned in the years that I've served in this Legislature—it has been since 1985—is that lawmaking is a challenging task, the issues are often complex and we have a responsibility here in this Legislature to try and make sure that people understand what the problem is, what the remedies or the options are and why the government of the day has chosen the method of remedies that it has chosen. It's important in our democracy to make sure that as we change laws or make new laws people understand very clearly the need for those laws to be made and to be changed.

I was at the committee hearings for Bill 169, an act to amend the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act, and I heard from every presenter who came forward who understood the implications of Bill 169 that while they acknowledged that there may be difficulties and problems, Bill 169 did not present the opportunity for debate on the issues that it raised that it should have.

Let me just elaborate for a moment. Because Bill 169 was a companion bill to Bill 102, it was presented under the guise of a package of pay equity reforms. I said at committee, I said during the second reading debate in this House and I repeat again—and I would be pleased to note in the remarks from the Chair of Management Board that he has confirmed this—that Bill 169 first and foremost, in its primary objective, has nothing whatever to do with pay equity. It has to do with the rights of the government, of the employer, to determine who is a crown employee.

That's what Bill 169 is about, and those are very important rights for employers and for managers within the government, but this is a very significant change from the history and the tradition of what has existed in Ontario for many years. When the minister says that this does not take away rights, I would argue with him that he is wrong, because it does change the rights of crown employees. This takes away the rights that crown employees have had to this point in time to argue before tribunals that they are in fact crown employees.

I believe, as I said during second reading, that the government must have the ability to manage and that the government must have the ability to determine who will and will not be a crown employee. I acknowledge that. But I stand here today in this House saying to the Chair of Management Board, to the Premier, Bob Rae,

and to his NDP caucus that you have not gone about this change in a way which has instilled confidence, permitted debate, allowed openness or in fact even allowed the issues to be raised.

When the Chair of Management Board made his second point, the first being government's desire to determine who is and who is not a crown employee and be able to manage the size of the civil service, he went on to the second point and again referred to the result of other legislation which had permitted particularly women in the extended public sector to argue that for the purposes of pay equity they should be considered as crown employees.

But it was not just women; it was also ambulance workers. One of the most significant decisions, as I pointed out in this House before, was the McKechnie Ambulance decision. I would note that the government treated the ambulance workers very differently than it treated the child care workers.

This bill sends out a mixed message to crown employees and to broader public sector employees that really this government cannot be trusted, because it has said one thing, it has said that Bill 169 is about pay equity. It has said that Bill 169 does not take away rights, but in fact Bill 169 has very little to do with pay equity and Bill 169 does take away rights. While we did have public hearings on Bill 169, we had them in the context of the pay equity bill, Bill 102.

I would point out to the minister, as he stands and he says that Bill 102 extends pay equity to all those people who could have sought remedy under the existing legislation, that what Bill 102 did was extend pay equity beyond the mandate of this government; that what Bill 102 did was, in my view, diminish the law as it exists today and hold out the promise for the future—some point in the future to be determined, although they've set a date.

But they've also set a precedent of delay. They've set a precedent of putting off into the future. I predict today that precedent will be one which this government, when it again has the opportunity perhaps to serve in opposition, will stand on this side of the House and criticize and realize that it had not served the interests of women in this province.

I'm most concerned about cynicism and alienation in our society today. Our democracy is really not working very well because people are not engaging and participating because they don't believe that they can really make a difference. I've been a member of this House since 1985 and I've had a lot of opportunities to influence public policy, to speak out on issues that I feel very strongly about.

I've always said to people that by participating, you can make a difference and you can influence. I told them how important it is to deal with their frustration

and their anger and their cynicism by learning more about what's going on and taking the opportunities to be heard, whether it's through petitions, coming out to committees or meeting with their local member.

Do you know what I've been hearing, Mr Speaker, over and over the last few months, as people start to realize the approach that this NDP government has taken? How they use the word "fairness" over and over again, and yet many of the results of their initiatives and their policies are grossly unfair.

The other thing that does is it increases the level of cynicism, voter alienation, fear, and it decreases participation in democracy, because people lose heart. So I would stress again how very important it is for us here in this Legislature to be as open as we can be about what it is that the government is doing and why the opposition is taking the position that we are taking.

Over the last few months, I have seen so many examples. I can't think of any other word: We often use language which is considered unparliamentary because it arouses the other side. It provokes and creates a furore in this House. I'm not going to use this word to be provocative. I'm going to say that the public confidence is diminished when they believe the government is being sneaky, and Bill 169 is sneaky.

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It is sneaky particularly because Bill 49 is on the order paper, and Bill 49 is the place where changes to the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act should be discussed and debated in total. Bill 169 standing on its own does not do justice to the important public policy issue that it contains.

If this government were committed to openness and accountability, it would not move forward with Bill 169 today. There's no rush. We don't have to do this in the middle of the summer. This bill is retroactive to the date it was tabled. It could easily be incorporated in Bill 49 and allow for the full public debate and public discussion that these issues deserve, but sad to say, this government has not chosen to do so.

There are so many examples of Bob Rae and the NDP government doing things in a sneaky way. I'm going to give you another couple of examples, things that I'm really concerned about and that I've done what I can as a private member in this House to both bring to public attention and attempt to remedy.

Bill 29 is an omnibus bill and is called an act to amend the Commercial Concentration Tax Act and other amendments. What that bill does is it repeals the Commercial Concentration Tax, but it also allows for intrusionary powers and changes to the Ontario drug benefit plan. The front of the bill doesn't even mention the Ontario drug benefit plan. The bill is not carried by the Minister of Health; it's carried by the Minister of Finance.

The bill—I'm now referring to Bill 29—under the guise of attempting to get everybody to vote for the repeal of a piece of tax legislation that I believe should've been repealed two years ago, and I have been very supportive of having that tax repealed—under that guise, to sneak through major changes without debate to the Ontario drug benefit program, in my view, is sneaky. I can tell you, as the critic responsible, that until I sat down and read through the whole bill from front to end, I did not know the changes to the Ontario drug benefit plan were there.

When the Minister of Finance got up and made his remarks upon tabling Bill 29, he didn't mention those changes. The Minister of Health never said it was coming. That does not serve democracy well.

I'll give you another example. Bill 30 contains a number of changes—again, it is an omnibus bill—to the provincial Retail Sales Tax Act. One of those changes is the repeal of the \$5 tire tax. I happen to believe that's a good initiative at this point in time. I think the consciousness of the consumer has been raised. Funds have been raised to fund projects for recycling of old tires. The reality is that while it is still a problem, the rationale for the tax and the timing has changed, and so repeal of that tax is a good thing. But because the government has been sneaky and included the repeal of the tire tax in a host of amendments to the Retail Sales Tax Act, what it means is that along with voting for the repeal of one act, of one tax, you would have to support changes that would increase sales tax for premiums on auto insurance and other things which are not in the interest of the people of the province of Ontario at this time.

I've said in this House before that I do not believe this is the time, as we are hoping to see recovery pick up steam, to be taking more money out of the economy in the form of new taxes, and so I saw Bill 29 and Bill 30 as sneaky legislation.

There has been a lot of debate and we've seen the social contract, Bill 48, already passed into law, and we've heard from so many ministers and from the Premier in answers to questions about how fair this piece of legislation was going to be. We know that sameness doesn't equal fairness. We know that as that legislation is implemented, people are suffering unduly because of the complexity. We know that it is not going to achieve the government's objectives and that it is very unfair and draconian legislation. Yes, that legislation is sneaky because it purports to do something that it cannot and will not do.

We see the auto insurance bill, which was passed in this House over the objections of my colleagues in the official opposition, Bill 164, yet another example of very sneaky legislation.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): Is that the \$200 one?

Mrs Caplan: That's the one. My constituents are telling me they already believe the insurance premiums are too high, and here you have a government that has brought in legislation which is going to increase the cost to the individual consumer, plus they added 5% provincial sales tax to the cost of auto insurance, and so we see those rates go up. What they've done when they did all this was to suggest that this met the commitment on auto insurance that they had made in the summer of 1990. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth.

I cite these examples to point out to you why I believe the public is cynical, why I believe they are frustrated, why I believe they are angry, disillusioned and feeling a sense of betrayal, because even when there is a legitimate initiative, even when there is a real problem that could be addressed in a proper and legitimate way, even when the government has a public policy objective which is deserving of their time and attention and debate, they go about it in a way which throws the whole issue into disrespect and ill repute because of the way they have gone about addressing it.

In response to that, to what I heard at committee from every presenter who came forward and spoke on Bill 169, everyone said, "Withdraw this bill." Everyone said this bill should not go forward because it has much broader implications than simply pay equity. I agree this bill has much broader implications for the civil service and I believe the issues in this bill are worthy and deserving of debate. We have not had that debate. We have not had that debate in this House and we have not had that debate at committee, because everyone was focusing their attention on the issue of pay equity and not on the issues of who should be considered a crown employee and what powers the government should have in determining crown employee status.

I will not be supporting Bill 169, out of protest for the process that the government has chosen and the sneakiness; the government has attempted to hide what it is doing in this legislation.

1700

I hope there will be others who will come forward and understand that the government has done a grave disservice to its own employees and to those in the broader public sector, its so-called social contract partners, the people it wants to come to the table and work with it and cooperate with it, at the same time as it has done this without proper public debate and proper public discussion.

Especially, the government cannot argue that there would not be an opportunity or that this was a simple amendment. They cannot argue that, because Bill 49 is on the order paper. It was tabled June 14, 1993, and it is comprehensive changes and amendments to the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act.

The fact that this piece of legislation, Bill 49, is

before us, yet to be dealt with, yet to have second reading debate, yet to have public hearings at committee, suggests that there is no urgency to move forward and ram through Bill 169 today. The government doesn't have to do this. Let me repeat: Bill 169 does not have to be dealt with today. It could be dealt with in conjunction with Bill 49, where people would have an opportunity to understand how the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act is going to be changed.

If this government were interested in fairness, it would combine Bill 169 and Bill 49 and deal with those issues together at committee. They would allow their own employees and those in the broader public sector to come forward at committee and discuss the implications of the changes to Bill 49. They would give them the opportunity to discuss what rights are appropriate and what rights are creating problems in the government and its ability to manage the civil service.

If they wanted to be fair and have the kind of public debate that would lead to better public policy, they would hold off on Bill 169 until Bill 49 had been dealt with by this House. Bill 49 is on the order paper, scheduled for second reading within the next few days. So I don't understand why the government refuses to listen to those people who are saying, like myself, that there may be a problem. I accept that, but you can deal with this in a way which is open and aboveboard, which will instill confidence and which will treat your own employees, and those who'd like to be your employees, with respect.

That would be fair. The process that this government, this NDP government of Bob Rae, who speaks of fairness at every opportunity—what this tells me is that he does not understand fair, he is not interested in fair; that he is going to have his way, damn the torpedoes, full steam ahead, my way or the highway. That's Bob Rae, and that's what he says. Every time I hear him say "fair," my skin begins to crawl, because so much of what he is doing is so unfair, and people are just beginning to realize how he has betrayed his principles, how he has betrayed the people of this province.

I'm not going to speak any further. Bill 169 is a very simple piece of legislation. What it says very clearly is that the government can decide by fiat, by order in council, who is and who is not entitled to the protections of crown employee status. That's really what it says.

By a simple stroke of the pen at the cabinet table, crown employees can have their rights taken away; crown employees can be determined no longer to be crown employees. They're worried about that, and justifiably so.

I would point out to this government that legislation like this in the hands of other governments in the future could be used in ways you have not contemplated, and that is simply because you have not had the appropriate

debate and the thoughtfulness and the discussion. To those of you on the government benches who purport to be concerned about workers and employees in the broader public sector, I would suggest that you think twice about what you are doing, because Bill 169 is a very powerful tool in the hands of the executive council and the Premier. With the stroke of a pen, they can decide whether or not an employee is a crown employee.

I don't believe that the changes to Bill 102 or the changes to Bill 49 enhance or protect or negate any of the changes that come in Bill 169, but my biggest criticism of this bill is that it has not had debate, its implications have not been considered. There was no one who came forward and supported this legislation in its present form. It is anti-worker, it is anti-democratic, it is downright sneaky, and it is unworthy of any government in the province of Ontario, especially today in this summer of 1993.

I will be leading my caucus in opposition to this bill to protest the method the government has chosen to march over the rights of public service workers.

The Acting Speaker: Questions or comments on the member for Oriole's participation?

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): I feel somewhat compelled again to stand up on this. I stand because, in a way, I take some ownership of this piece of legislation.

In my experience prior to election in 1990, I confronted one of the leaders of the Liberals at that time, the Treasurer, Mr Nixon, with a number of my colleagues within the labour movement and talked a lot about what's in this piece of legislation. I can remember some discussions I had with that individual that weren't too pleasant. I can tell you that this piece of legislation deals with a lot of the concerns that might be out there at this point. The Treasurer at that time didn't have very nice comments to make to a number of us who went to see him. I wanted to get that on record because, to me, this is very important.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I just would like to say that of course we will be voting against this bill also. In commenting on the member for Oriole's comments, it's very interesting when you have a bill that, as this does: "amends the Public Service Act and the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act to provide that individuals become public servants, civil servants and crown employees only by an expressed appointment as such. Only employees of designated crown agencies will be eligible to be crown employees."

And then it goes on to say, "The bill enables the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations designating those crown agencies whose employees are eligible to be considered crown employees." It gets back to the actual wording where we refer to the Lieutenant

Governor in Council, which of course is the cabinet.

So here we are giving the cabinet a tremendous amount of power, and at the moment it's very significant, because this is the same cabinet that is expanding the civil service in this province and in fact is taking the civil service, up into management and middle- and upper-management positions, into unions for the first time in this province, which is of great concern to those of us who realize that the greater the power of unions in this province, the greater the loss to the public as a whole. The fact that 33% of the workforce today is unionized is very significant when you look at the direction this government in fact would take the rest of the province, and this act is just a further tool for them to have control over the people who work here.

1710

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Oriole has two minutes in response.

Mrs Caplan: I listened very carefully to the member for Yorkview, and I don't think he is aware of what this piece of legislation has to say, because this legislation has nothing to do with any discussions that he would have had with the former Treasurer, Mr Nixon. For him, let me tell him what this legislation has to say.

This legislation is about who is and is not designated a crown employee under the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act, and I would say to him that this is a very simple piece of legislation. It has very little to do with pay equity. It has broad-ranging and sweeping powers where the cabinet of Ontario can decide, for the purposes of the protections offered to crown employees, whether or not those rights will be given or whether those rights will be taken away. This is a very powerful tool.

I see the Attorney General shaking her head. I honestly do not believe that the members of the cabinet understand the implications and the precedent that this legislation establishes.

I have to tell you that you will at some point in the future remember this day when we in the future see crown employees who potentially have their rights stripped away, where the government of the day, whoever that government is—and if it's a right-wing Conservative government, God help us. You've given them the tools to treat employees in a way I would not want to see any employee treated, the stripping away of rights. So you had better realize what you are doing as you pass this legislation, and I will not be supporting it.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): The stated goal of this bill is that the government has introduced these amendments to ensure that it can keep control over the growth and cost of the government's payroll, certainly a laudable objective.

The difficulties that I have with it are that there is the

potential here for the government to try a giant shell game. We know they're quite adept at this kind of thing, and as we move towards the next election I suspect that they are going to use this to claim that they have reduced the size of the civil service, a civil service which I would say was massively increased in size by the previous Liberal government. The NDP inherited a very difficult situation in the sense that the Liberals had expanded the civil service at an absolutely unheard-of rate. They added some 9,000 civil servants, direct employees of the crown—civil servants, not the broader public sector—within just a five-year period: this at the time that everywhere in the world companies were reducing the size of their workforce because they were embracing technology and making sure that they were the most efficient, but the Liberal government decided to increase.

The NDP have not demonstrated any management ability to be able to significantly affect the size of the civil service, and in fact they have brought more people in, and what they have done is they have politicized the civil service to a degree which the Liberals, in fairness to them, did not do. They brought in some of their appointments. That's fair enough; that will happen with any political party. But this government has brought in huge numbers of people specifically because of their political affiliation.

We only have to look at the head of the civil service, somebody who ran the NDP election. Then, after he worked in the Premier's office, they moved him over to head the civil service. There's no doubt about it. He has to go when this government is thrown out of office, presumably in 1995. But the NDP will undoubtedly try and use this legislation to show that they have downsized the government by saying of people, "No, they're not really crown employees."

They have also, at the same time, moved on creating these various crown corporations. We have the Ontario Realty Corp, the Ontario Clean Water Agency, the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp and the Ontario Financing Authority. They created a new class of crown corporations which ensured that those people who were moved over from the civil service into these crown corporations would in fact enjoy all of the benefits of being government employees and all of the protection that implies, but they are trying to get them off the books so that it looks as though, presto, they've reduced the size of the civil service. We will make sure that the electorate remembers this.

But what I would say to the government is that it should be addressing themselves to the more serious task of really fixing the problems. I hear from my friends across the floor every time we have a debate of, oh, how other governments have created these problems and how they are so lily white. Fine, if that's what you believe. You have an opportunity today to move on

these particular issues and to prove to the public that you really have solved them, but don't engage in shell games.

I've spoken about the massive increase in the civil service under the Liberals. Why do you want to bless that? Move and make sensible reductions, and make the civil service more efficient. I do believe that there was some merit in what the member for Oriole said in her debate, and that was that the Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act, Bill 49, and this bill should in truth be combined. That would not be inconsistent with what you have been doing in terms of combining bills. In fact, it would be a lot more intellectually honest than what you have been doing, in the sense that there are many omnibus bills that you have brought in. The perfect example is the Ontario drug benefit plan which was snuck in on Bill 29, a bill which is titled an act to eliminate the commercial concentration tax.

I have to give this government a compliment. They have been the very best in terms of creative titling of bills, because all other parties have a lot to learn from this government. If you cloak something in a motherhood name, it's very hard to vote against it, because it is very hard for the public to understand why you would vote against something which seems quite appropriate.

I mean, who would want to vote against the elimination of the commercial concentration tax? I myself pleaded with the Treasurer on many occasions to eliminate the commercial concentration tax, but lo and behold, when you read through the bill, they have snuck in the fact that you are going to take away drug benefits to seniors in that same bill. Surprisingly, very surprisingly, there was no allusion to that fact, which was probably the most important part of the bill, in the title of the bill. The bill spoke about, in its title, an act to eliminate the commercial concentration tax.

That's what this government has been doing. It's been combining bills, but quite frankly, they're a hodgepodge that bear no relationship to one another and have overtones of what happens in the US political system where a president is presented with a bill with a whole set of things that he wants and a whole lot of things that he doesn't want and the president is in the position that he has to veto a bill and send it back to Congress. That opens up a very, very dangerous precedent, if that is what this government intends to do.

1720

I've no doubt the NDP will say, "Oh no, that's rubbish." But simply read the bills. Read the titles of the bills. Look at the content and look in your heart of hearts. Can you seriously disagree with the fact that that is what you're doing? So why would it be incompatible to bring together the guts of this bill with Bill 49 so that a reasonable discussion of that can be held?

The danger we see in this bill is that with pay equity the government has exempted itself for a period of time

to comply with pay equity. They've moved it off conveniently to when the next government is in power. I don't believe anybody in this House disagrees with the concept of pay equity, but why on earth does this government find itself in the position that it says, "Oh, we want to push off the payment of pay equity until a point after the next election," when it is not allowing corporations, which are in equally dire circumstances, to do that? If it's good for the private sector, why then is it not good for the public sector? That is one of the great dangers contained in this bill and one of the reasons I and my party will be voting against it.

I just want to, in conclusion, turn to that great document which will live in the annals of infamy called the NDP's Agenda for People, which was its manifesto in the last election. If you want to read along with me, turn to page 4, under pay equity. This might interest you.

I'll just quote from it, the bottom of page 4, pay equity—and my Liberal friends will be interested in this. It says: "The Liberal pay equity bill, passed in June 1987 excludes hundreds of thousands of women—many of whom, such as garment workers and child care workers, are among the lowest-paid workers in the province."

Let's just reflect on that for a moment. You remember just recently the government said it was going to exempt anybody under the so-called social contract from any reductions in their pay if they earned less than \$30,000 a year. Remember that, Mr Speaker? I'm sure you do because I know you follow these things very carefully. Well, lo and behold, they haven't really exempted those people. They criticized in their election platform the fact that the Liberals had excluded "hundreds of thousands of women—many of whom, such as garment workers and child care workers, are among the lowest-paid workers in the province."

With this Bill 169, they get to designate who is a government employee and through their other bills they have exempted themselves from paying pay equity to their own employees until after the next election, until the next government's in. And do you know something? I've got a kind of suspicion that they know they won't be the government, because we've seen in many of their actions that they are deferring a whole bunch of problems for the next government.

We've already seen, for example, that with car licences—they have moved recently to a six-year car licence. Now, I'll tell you, that means that about a two-and-a-half-year window after the next government comes in there's going to be no revenue whatsoever, save and except for the people who are getting an automobile licence for the very first time in their life. In rough figures, that's about \$80 million a year that the next government won't have.

But there is a quid pro quo. Yes, they won't have \$80

million, but do you know what? They will have the pleasure of paying pay equity that this government is not paying to its own workers. This is the dishonesty of a government which put out a document called Agenda for People in the last election, which isn't worth the paper it was printed on. I raised it yesterday, and it was very interesting. One of their members said, "Oh, I never read it." Do you know what? I don't believe him. I don't believe him.

Let's go to the same section on pay equity. It says: "New Democrats would pass legislation that covers all women. The cost to the government of eliminating current exemptions is estimated to be \$60 million."

Let's just turn to the bill that we have before us. Andy Todd, chief negotiator for OPSEU, estimated that it would cost Ontario at least half a billion dollars a year just to bring 10,000 to 15,000 transfer agency salaries up to par with the civil service. Now I think we've got it. We understand what the game is. They don't want to pay what they are expecting private business to pay.

The basic problem we have here is that we have a government which is populated by people who have no business experience. All they've done is they have been on receiving end. They've always been thinking up schemes: How can we suck a little more tax dollars out of corporations? We can remember, legion, the kind of comments about corporations not paying their fair share.

You know what? The Fair Tax Commission has pricked holes in all of their schemes. They've told them in essence that they're all wet with all of the things that they've said in the past. The government itself is now ignoring its own Fair Tax Commission, which they so carefully selected people to sit on. But do you know what? The results aren't coming in as they wanted, so they don't like it, so they're going to ignore it.

So what do they do? They continue on in their merry way. They grab future revenues from future governments for automobile licences. They don't pay pay equity to their own people. You can do that later.

With the social contract—that's incredible. We have those people who will be designated essential services: people who, for example, work in such services as homes for the aged, where there is a proportion of the workers who must be on duty at all times. Those people cannot take holidays, the unpaid days off, the 12 per year, just as they wish because there wouldn't be enough staff. So what they will have to do is they will have to take those days off during their regularly scheduled holidays. That's very interesting because what it does, once again, is it defers the payment for those holidays until—get this—March 31, 1996.

Do you know, Mr Speaker—you'll really be surprised—that's after the expiration of this government's mandate. In other words, we see a pattern. We see a

pattern of grab any revenues you can now and defer all of the problems till the next government is in. It will undoubtedly be either the PCs or the Liberals. I happen to think it's the PCs. I know my friends on the Liberal benches don't agree with me. That's fine. But either way, it will be a government that has to pick up the pieces and solve these problems that the government of the day now is creating.

Defer all of the costs and grab the revenues now, and with this legislation, they will claim that they've reduced the size of the civil service. That is not very intellectually honest, just like this document, Agenda for People, wasn't very intellectually honest. I think the authors of it should be hung, drawn and quartered. People are fed up, absolutely fed up, with lies.

Quite frankly, I think all parties should come forward with an agenda at the beginning of an election. It should clearly and concisely state all of their platform. It should be costed not by the party that is bringing it forward, but by an independent body. They should not be allowed to make one single promise after that and they should be expected to live substantially by the words of it.

1730

Hon Richard Allen (Minister without Portfolio in Economic Development and Trade): You know a government has to change with the times. You know that economic circumstances change. You know it is necessary to have some flexibility in programming.

Mr Turnbull: Now this is very interesting. The former minister, he's now deputy minister, gets to keep his car and driver. They call it "car and driver" now. It used to be "limo and chauffeur" when they were in opposition, when they heckled both the Liberals and the Conservatives. Now they call it "car and driver." I'm not quite sure what the difference is. Maybe it's the colour of the car.

But he's heckling me. He thinks this would be a straightjacket. I'll tell you, former minister, now associate minister or whatever you're called, that you simply are ignoring what you have done. He is heckling me and saying, "The economic circumstances have changed."

Yes, they have changed. They acknowledged in their own document that we were going into a serious recession. They acknowledged it in the very document that I'm talking about. Notwithstanding that, they bought the electorate with its own money, which successive parties of all political stripes have done, and the electorate are sick to their back teeth. It is time we all woke up. It is not acceptable. Given the fact that you knew that you were going into a recession, it was reasonable to put forward a reasonable, balanced agenda. But they didn't.

They hate it when we bring this document out. I have

never seen them more antsy than when we bring this document out, because this is a catalogue of lies.

I remember when Bob Rae, on the first day of the election, called the former Premier, David Peterson, a liar. Well, I wonder what people will be calling Mr Rae. I've got a suspicion, because I've already heard them saying it, but far be it from me to suggest what that word would be. But we are fed up with intellectual dishonesty, pushing off the problems to the future and grabbing all the revenue and trying to disguise it as being efficient and responsive to the needs of the economy.

Quite frankly, my friends, the international economic community isn't buying this. I'll tell you that unless you smarten up and make some real, serious changes to the way you're running the economy and not having a deficit of over \$10 billion a year, there will be no uptake for your bonds and you won't be able to refinance your future. Do you remember that tape you saw at the beginning of the year about New Zealand? Fellows, it's happening here.

The Acting Speaker: Questions or comments?

Mrs Marland: The member for York Mills talked about how this government has politicized the civil service in this province, and I just want to lay out very clearly the example which for all of us was a turning point in the history of this province.

We had in this province a particularly fine person as secretary to cabinet. Peter Barnes was secretary to cabinet when the Progressive Conservative Party was the government. He also made the transition to being secretary to cabinet under Premier David Peterson for the Liberal government. Peter Barnes is an exemplary civil servant. I think the very fact that he could make the transition from the Progressive Conservatives to the Liberals to the New Democratic Party government said more about Peter Barnes than anything I or anyone else in this House could say. Not knowing him well personally but knowing him from a professional basis, I always have admired Peter Barnes.

What this government did when they decided to appoint David Agnew, the Premier's personal campaign manager, to the position of secretary of cabinet was, for the first time in the history of this province, to politicize the highest post in the civil service in this province.

In order to do that, what did they do? They had to remove the Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. In order to remove Tim Armstrong, that deputy minister, they had to promise him a \$300,000, two-year contract, without tender I might add. When he got his \$1,000-a-day contract plus expenses, that actually—

Hon Mr Allen: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I think the member is getting rather close to the involvement of neutral civil servants in the political debate in

this House. I think she is attributing arguments and motives with respect to movement of personnel in the civil service about which she does not really know the facts.

The Acting Speaker: That's not really a point of order. There's very little time. The member for Mississauga South.

Mrs Marland: The facts are that a deputy minister is now a private consultant with a \$300,000-a-year contract which wasn't tendered. I need say no more.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for York Mills has two minutes in response.

Mr Turnbull: I think my colleague the member for Mississauga South brings once again a very salient point to bear, and that is, the very expensive payoffs of senior civil servants.

I had a discussion today with somebody who used to be a very senior deputy minister. That person very clearly pointed out how professional the Ontario civil service had been and the fact that the present civil service at the most senior level consists of two sides: one is the political hacks they've brought in from various socialist administrations or ex-socialist administrations around the country, and then on the other side, we have the remnants of the professional civil service, who are so terrified to open their mouths now that they won't give advice, which is much needed.

I'll tell you that if we form the next government and I'm a minister, I will tell my deputy minister on day one, "I want you to close the door, sit down and argue with me on every single item that I view, so that we have a clear discussion of all the options and look at what in fact we can do under this scenario."

I think it's just hilarious that we have such a bunch of incompetents running this government. Every single day, I get a call from my constituents who say, "How can you stand these people?" and my answer is, "It's very, very difficult."

The Acting Speaker: Does the honourable minister have some closing remarks?

Hon Mr Charlton: Just very briefly, I'd like to say that I listened to the comments of the member for Oriole very carefully. Although we don't agree with her view of this bill, I take her comments seriously and assure her that from my perspective, we will ensure that her predictions don't come true.

I would like to thank the members who participated throughout the process, including the committee hear-

ings, on both sides of the House. It is a serious topic about a serious piece of legislation that has important consequences, and all the points of view that were put are important to the overall conclusions that this Legislature reaches.

I'd like to thank the staff of the Management Board secretariat who helped us both before my time in Management Board and since with the carriage of this piece of legislation.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Charlton has moved third reading of Bill 169.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour please say "aye."

All those opposed please say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): The three House leaders have agreed that the two bills we've dealt with this afternoon would be all the business on the agenda this afternoon. Just before I move the adjournment of the House, I'd like to deal with business for the coming week.

Pursuant to standing order 55, I would like to announce the business for at least the first day of the coming week. On Monday, July 26, we will give second reading consideration to Bill 50, which is one of the expenditure control bills, and second reading consideration to Bill 8, the Ontario Casino Corporation Act. The business for the remainder of the week is still under negotiation between the House leaders and will be announced on a day-by-day basis next week.

It should be noted that by agreement of the three House leaders, we will be dealing with an evening sitting on Monday at least, from 6 till 8:30, and we will judge progress during the week about other possible extended sittings, and we passed a motion earlier this afternoon that sets aside the two hours on Thursday morning for the consideration of government business, if that be necessary as well.

I move the adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

It now being 5:40 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 pm.

The House adjourned at 1742.

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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 26 July 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 26 juillet 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers



Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



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Monday 26 July 1993

The House met at 1334.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

INTERNATIONAL PLOWING MATCH

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I rise today to let the folks in Ontario know about the 1993 Bruce county hosting of the International Plowing Match. That match is being held on September 21 through the end of the 25th, and all the people around the Walkerton area, in particular the Johnston family, and Bruce county and Brant township are looking forward to entertaining more people than have ever been entertained before at a match of this sort.

As everyone knows, in 1976 Bruce hosted what has been, I think, the most successful match ever in the province, and this year it looks like Jim MacKay, the president of the Bruce County Plowmen's Association, and Jack Cumming, who is the chairman of this year's international event in Bruce, have planned a very wonderful event indeed.

Along with the regular sorts of events of course there will be lots of activity, the professional plowing contest held for the real farming personnel of this province and internationally, and also for those of us who plow on these very special occasions.

I extend again to all members of the Legislative Assembly an invitation to plow with us in Bruce county, in Brant township, my home township. I know David Thomson, the reeve, and the council will be willing to entertain all of us as we try to get things straight, at least for once. We're all invited to the international plowing match September 21 through 25 in Brant township, at Walkerton, Ontario.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): The effects of the NDP's forestry policies are devastating the industry's operations in Ontario, both large and small.

Due to the opposition pressure in this House and from the Ontario Lumber Manufacturers' Association, the Minister of Natural Resources will now delay the 100% increase on stumpage fees. Although this was perhaps the correct decision, I think it was the only option, given the fact that the minister was prepared to charge an additional \$11 tax per cord on employers who only make \$8 profit per cord.

This planned tax grab shows just how desperate and out of touch this government really is. The minister's decision last Thursday to delay the stumpage fee increase until October 1, 1993, was a clear admission that his policies were not well researched.

However, I think the minister has still missed the point. Small independent contractors and small mills

cannot afford to have their rates on parity with large integrated mills. Any new increase in stumpage fees will result in major job losses throughout Ontario. The only logical course of action is to scrap the plan of raising stumpage fees altogether.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, and the plowing match that the member for Bruce just described will be in Renfrew county in 1994.

GO TRANSIT

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I have received a lot of phone calls and letters over the past couple of weeks about the decision by GO Transit to cut its peak-hour Uxbridge-Elizabeth Street terminal bus service.

In fact, I was at a meeting on Monday, July 19, held by the planning committee of the Uxbridge township council that took deputations from residents and the council, and GO Transit officials were present at the meeting to explain how their decisions were based on subsidy rates and ridership. That's fine for them, but that doesn't deal with the rage of my constituents from Uxbridge who have no public transportation alternative to get to Toronto.

I attended another meeting Thursday night that was held in Stouffville. Both Uxbridge and Stouffville residents were present because both groups of commuters feel threatened. The Stouffville residents are protesting the time of the GO trains as being inconvenient for people who have flexible work arrangements or child care commitments. The earliest train departs from Union Station at 5:20 pm.

I want the members of the Legislature to realize how GO Transit decisions in dealing with the expenditure control plan have impacted on my constituents. Many of these residents will be moving away from these areas after investigating GO services that have been stolen from them.

My constituents not only want to help GO Transit, but they've put together a riding profile, they've put together alternatives, and I hope the GO Transit officials will take these into serious consideration.

COMPENSATION FOR AIDS PATIENTS

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): Once again, I speak to the House on the question of a compensation package for those who have contracted the HIV virus through a tainted blood supply. Once again, I bring to the attention of the Legislature that the Minister of Health is stalling in this important area of public policy, where she has made a personal commitment.

Time is running out for haemophiliacs and blood transfusion recipients who were infected with the AIDS

virus. The government has admitted its culpability in the matter, and while other governments, such as Nova Scotia, have acted in a forward-looking manner, this government has stalled.

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Hemophilia Ontario has maintained all along that the compensation requested is not a matter of benevolence or welfare; it is a recompense for grievous injury. The fallback of the social assistance system isn't adequate to address this injury. A compensation package is required.

Last Thursday, Hemophilia Ontario was told that there would be a meeting, at which time the government would present its proposal for a package. Instead of that meeting, they received a call saying there would be no meeting to present that proposal. Further, they learned from the media that Health Minister Grier had told reporters that no compensation package would be announced until September.

Many of the HIV-positive hemophiliacs and transfusion recipients are nearing the end of their lives. Many of those who are dying have dependent families, many of whom have been financially ruined by AIDS. One or two of the people who were infected by the AIDS virus die every week. Hemophilia Ontario rightly asks if this government is expecting a settlement by attrition. We certainly hope not.

ALIENATED PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): A group of people in my riding have formed an association of parents whose children have been alienated from them by their ex-partners. They are the Alienated Parents Association. They have no significant relationship with their children, and this in some cases has lasted for years. In fact, their children have been encouraged to see them as unfit and mentally unbalanced. Their children have no experience to draw on, are young and vulnerable, and are being used as a pawn in a deadly game.

Members of the new association feel it's time that the public is made aware of the existence of these deprived parents and just how large a segment of the population they are, and that their story is told. They know their children deserve the love and support of both parental figures; otherwise, their ability to form future relationships and their mental wellbeing may be at risk. They are good and loving parents, and there's a great need to educate the public, the school system and the legal system in order to stop this injustice.

A member in my riding, Mary Anne Morrison, at 338-7175, is available if you need the assistance of the Alienated Parents Association or if you can assist with this worthwhile association.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): I want to take a moment to call to the attention of this House the fact that the third party is truly out of touch with rural

Ontario. It's clearly indicated in the *Toronto Sun*, where I find out they're asking a Liberal to be a Tory, which is very close.

Last week the member from Don Mills stood in his place and actually suggested that putting manufacturing in rural settings was "out of whack." As a member of a rural riding, I must once again take exception to the comments of the members opposite.

Rural Ontario is made up of much more than feed stores, as the member from Don Mills suggested. In my riding, farmers have gathered together to bring an ethanol production facility to Kent county, a facility that will not only create much-needed jobs but will also create a market for their corn, a market needed since the federal cousins of the member opposite started signing the free trade agreement.

Farmers are studying the feasibility of production of tomato paste in a shut-down facility in Chatham. Farmers and rural communities in Ontario are progressive in seeing the future, and their future means finding creative manufacturing bases to produce their crops in Ontario.

When it comes to telecommunications, rural Ontario is once again a leader. Smart Talk Network started in Kent county with eight employees. Two years later, the company has 165 employees and expects to hire another 200 employees over the next two years in the city of Chatham. This company from rural Ontario supplies long-distance service to Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia and will soon be expanding to Manitoba.

Feed stores are not the answer for rural Ontario; productivity is.

KIDNEY DIALYSIS

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): The patients who are involved with the kidney dialysis unit at Hotel Dieu Hospital in St Catharines are eagerly awaiting the announcement of the Minister of Health or at least the funding to be forthcoming so that this project may be undertaken.

Members of the Legislature may be aware that this issue has been raised on numerous occasions over the last couple of years. I had the opportunity, with some of my Niagara colleagues, to attend a press conference at which it was announced that the funding for the renovation of the haemodialysis unit in St Catharines at the Hotel Dieu Hospital would be forthcoming.

I have been in contact with a patient who is a spokesperson for the patients who take advantage of the facilities that are there, and he has informed me that as of last Friday the funding had not yet reached the Hotel Dieu Hospital.

I call upon the Minister of Health today to flow the funds, which were promised appropriately several months ago, in order that the very crowded conditions that those of us from the Niagara Peninsula witnessed

on a tour that all the members took of the facility can be overcome, and that the facilities provided for the patients will be such that they will be served in an appropriate manner and that the staff which have been so dedicated in providing this service under adverse conditions will indeed be in a better position to assist those patients.

TAXATION

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): For many years, it has been a matter of fact that because of taxes Ontario is a much more attractive place to live and to do business than the province of Quebec. By far the main reason for that was our comparative tax advantage and less restrictive government regulatory environment.

Beginning with the former Liberal administration, and continued by this government, Ontario is becoming a much less attractive place in which to live and do business. Last week, the Ottawa Citizen reported that a married taxpayer earning \$40,000 a year saw his or her income tax advantage drop from over \$2,000 in 1983 to a tax disadvantage of almost \$100. Half of the drop occurred under the Liberal administration and continues in free fall with this government.

The NDP tries to describe the current situation as a revenue shortfall. Let me suggest to them that what many residents of eastern Ontario see when they look east: The revenue shortfall they see is their own personal revenue. They see the NDP claim of cost-cutting, but they also see no change in patronage appointments or in favoured NDP political projects.

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): You should talk.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Durham East.

Mr Villeneuve: They see NDP claims of cutting cabinet size, but they see more cabinet ministers. They see the NDP announce program cuts and then they see confusion in the social contract legislation. They see that the deficit continues to rise. They also see Ontario doing nothing when Ontario businesses are shut out of Quebec and when Ontario commercial vehicles are harassed on Quebec highways.

This is a terrible situation and it must change soon.

PICKERING AIRPORT LAND

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): I rise today as I'm gravely concerned about plans that the federal government has for thousands of acres of land in the northern part of my riding; to be more specific, the Pickering airport lands.

I have been involved with this community since the early 1970s when I joined a group called People or Planes. Our fight was somewhat successful. We were, however, unable to prevent the massive expropriation of 18,600 acres of land, which drove thousands of people from their homes, many of whom had roots that

extended back many generations. This assault caused a complete change in the complexion of the community almost overnight.

Since that time, other families have moved into these homes. This long-term tenancy has transformed the desolate post-expropriation area into a community once again. Many of these families have raised their children in these homes. They've developed their own roots and a strong attachment to this community. Now their fate is uncertain once again. Nearly half of the 350 leases have been reduced to 30-day renewals.

But why now? Why sell this land when the province, the region of Durham and the town of Pickering are all in the middle of a number of critical planning processes?

The feds have been announcing that they would be selling this land for almost a decade, but this time I believe they're really going to do it. My concern is that this land has great potential, not only now but for future generations. It makes up a substantial portion of the green space of the GTA. How can anyone begin to put a price on its value?

I have extended an offer to the federal government to join in the extensive planning processes that are taking place in this area.

It has been 21 years and I'm still fighting for this land. This is a fight I will not give up until something positive results from it.

SPECIAL REPORT, OMBUDSMAN

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table a special report of the Ombudsman, Ontario, on the cases of Ms R., Ms M. and the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I would invite you to welcome the Ombudsman, who is seated in the Speaker's gallery. Welcome.

I would also invite all members to welcome to our gallery this afternoon, seated in the Speaker's gallery, Mr Harry Greenway, member of Parliament, the House of Commons, London, England. He is joined by his wife, Carol, and son, Mark. Please join me in welcoming them to our assembly.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. It is now time for oral questions and the honourable member for Renfrew North.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): The member for Durham East perhaps has a question he might wish to put to our visitor.

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ORAL QUESTIONS

TRANSPORTATION

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I have a question to the Premier and it concerns his social

contract. The Premier and his government, as part of their social contract, appear to have committed their government to a new policy which could very well see, within a short period of time, hundreds of thousands of young people as young as four years of age being bused to school, not as they have traditionally been bused in almost all cases in the yellow school buses but, rather, as part of the social contract arrangement, these young people in urban environments could very well find themselves being bused to school in municipal buses which do not of course have many of the same special safety provisions that are built into the yellow school buses.

My question to the Premier, in the absence of the Treasurer and the Minister of Transportation, is, can he confirm that his government is prepared to contemplate a new school busing policy which would see tens of thousands of young Ontarians, many of them as young as four years of age, being transported to school, not in the very safety-conscious yellow school buses but rather on municipal buses?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I think I'll refer this question to the Minister of Education.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I can tell the member that in terms of busing policy for the schools in the province, we are obviously first and foremost concerned about the safety of students in the province. Secondly, we're also concerned and interested in any and every way that taxpayers' money can be saved.

The member will know that there are some areas of the province, at least at the secondary level, where the public transit system is used by the secondary students. With respect to his specific question about school boards at the elementary level looking at using municipal transit, I'm not aware of specific cases. If he wants to raise them, I would be glad to look at them. Certainly, our ministry and this government would look at all of these issues in terms of saving money, but first and foremost, safety of students.

Mr Conway: There can be no doubt that the primary concern here for all members must be safety, and the safety of young children, many of whom are four and five years of age. That's why I was astonished to read in the appendix to the municipal-provincial agreement which the government of Bob Rae has signed that the provincial government seems to be clearly committing the province to a process that is going to see tens of thousands of very young students in urban Ontario being shifted off yellow school buses and on to municipal buses. It's very clear from this appendix.

Hon Mr Rae: No, it is not clear from the appendix.

Mr Conway: Well, the Premier wouldn't answer my question. I don't even think they know what's in their own social contract. Every day is a day of discovery,

particularly as we race down to fail-safe day, August 1.

The Highway Traffic Act is replete with regulations that attach to yellow school buses, which must meet certain very stringent safety conditions that are nowhere attached, as I understand it, to municipal buses. Will the government give an assurance to parents and students that the safety of their children and those students will in no way be jeopardized by the social contract agreements that the Rae government has already signed?

Hon Mr Cooke: This government of course would give the assurance that children's safety is not going to be put at risk, but I think we have all learned to understand that questions from the member—making statements that tens of thousands of students are going to be put at risk because of his interpretation of a particular segment of the social contract legislation is absolute nonsense at its worst, and fearmongering for students and parents, which is unfortunate, but we've become used to that kind of fearmongering from this member.

Mr Conway: The accord that the Rae government has signed in the municipal sector commits the provincial government to an action plan to get on with integration in this connection, to transfer these responsibilities from school bus operators to municipal transit authorities in urban areas.

I can understand how the government might want to discount what I have to say, but the Ontario Motor Coach Association has today issued a release highlighting its concern around the safety question. Is the Minister of Education and Training aware of the concerns on the safety count that the motor coach association has raised?

Is the Minister of Education, the member for Windsor-Riverside, aware that in his own city, in recent times, Ernst and Young have concluded a study which indicates that when one compares the cost of running the current system of school busing versus the municipal system, the municipal system, to which the Rae government wants to move, is substantially higher in cost? Is the minister, the member from Windsor, aware of that study as well?

Hon Mr Cooke: Well, I certainly will take a look at the release the member is referring to. I haven't seen it today. We'll take a look at it. But I can assure the member that there is no grand plan to move all the students in this province from the school buses, which he says are safer than municipal buses. There is no grand plan to do this. It's an exaggeration, inappropriate at the least, for the member to make that kind of an accusation today.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question.

Mr Conway: I think it's time that the Rae government read its own social contract, because it's quite clear that the Minister of Education and the Premier do not know what's in this appendix, which clearly com-

mits this government to this very significant new process.

The Speaker: And your second question?

ONTARIO HYDRO CONTRACT

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): A second question is to my friend the minister responsible for Hydro. I want to say to my friend the minister responsible for Hydro that since the interesting discussion of some six or eight days ago, when members of the Legislature and Hydro ratepayers were painfully made aware of the polling that was going on over at Hydro, the \$1.3 million worth of money that Hydro does not have that's been spent to ascertain the love interests of ratepayers across the province, since that time, my mail has been busy.

I have received an envelope, a brown envelope; my favourite kind of envelope, a brown envelope. But the envelope contained some very interesting new data. I'm just wondering whether or not my friend the minister responsible for Hydro is aware of the following: that in October 1991—it seems to be part of the earlier poll referred to, the so-called Goldfarb poll, which was \$1.3 million worth of data collection. But it appears there's more. It appears that a Mr Greg White of Market Vision Research was given, in October 1991, on an untendered basis, an opportunity to do \$1.3 million worth of poll analysis for Hydro.

Is the minister aware that Market Vision Research has been given a \$1.3-million contract, on an untendered basis, to develop a communication strategy to assist Hydro in making its customers consume less in the coming years?

1400

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): Mr Speaker, as you will know, in the business of polling, it is quite normal for firms, particularly the largest firm in Ontario that is responsible for serving the ratepayers of commercial, residential and industrial across Ontario, to have included in polls some lifestyle questions to determine what kind of people are providing which kinds of answers with regard to the electricity-consuming public.

Having said that, we will agree that there may in fact have been on occasion in the past in the history of Ontario Hydro some excesses, and it is for that very reason that we brought Mr Strong in to restructure the corporation so we don't have the continuation of these kinds of wasteful practices in the future.

Mr Conway: Supplementary to my friend the minister, this untendered contract appears to have been let during the pontificate of one Marc Eliesen. It is to cover a period of October 1991 to October 1993, the first of three parts valued at \$1.3 million, and Mr Greg White of Market Vision Research, who is expected, for his \$53,000-a-month retainer, to commit himself at least

half-time to this project; he must commit himself, according to the terms of this contract, to at least half-time. He is to develop a strategic plan to assist Hydro to develop a marketing strategy to develop—get this—“among other things, the psychological precursors that will be necessary to reduce hydro-electricity consumption in Ontario in the coming years.”

Is the minister not concerned? Is he not, like the rest of us, just fed up with on the one hand hearing that Hydro is broke, up to its neck in red ink, so broke that it of course can't contribute anything to the social contract, yet it continues to give up, on an untendered basis, multimillion-dollar contracts to develop psychological precursors to help us all conserve? Is the minister aware of this boondoggle and will he take steps to stop it forthwith?

Hon Mr Wildman: I suppose the member was speaking *ex cathedra* when he was talking about a pontificate.

I would say that the member knows that the current decisions that are being taken to restructure Ontario Hydro are being taken at a time when we now have a chairperson and a board having the responsibility to ensure that we do indeed cut the use of Ontario Hydro's product, electricity, in the province and that we ensure that the operations of Ontario Hydro are done in the most effective and most economic ways possible.

I do not have the information about the particular contract, which I understand from the member was let in 1991. I will look into it and report back to the House.

Mr Conway: I appreciate that, because I've got to tell you, the people of Ontario, at least the people I represent, are fed up with this kind of crap. Week after week they face tax increases—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the honourable member choose better—

Mr Conway: —and job losses; they're told that we must all share the pain to get out of this misery. They want to believe, but every week—last week we were told \$1.3 million was spent by Hydro to do field research to find out about things like their love life. Now we're told that another firm has been hired at \$1.3 million for just the first part, October 1991 to October 1993, to analyse that field research and to provide strategic advice to develop the psychological precursors that will help us all reduce electricity consumption. I mean, the people have had it to their teeth.

This contract is in three parts. It can be terminated, according to the information I have, with fairly short notice. The first phase of it, \$1.3 million, is concluded in October 1993, but it's very clear that a second and third phase, committing millions more, undoubtedly, is contemplated.

The Speaker: Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Conway: Will the minister give me and, more importantly, the Hydro ratepayers this assurance: that he will inquire into this and ensure that at the end of this phase one \$1.3-million boondoggle, this kind of insane spending at Hydro will stop?

Hon Mr Wildman: I've already indicated to the member that I will inquire into this matter and I will respond to the House. I also agree with the member that the kind of insane spending we've seen at Ontario Hydro which, under his government, completed Darlington at a cost of \$14 billion and has put the whole province into debt, must end. That's why we're doing it, and it's unfortunate that his government didn't do it itself.

HEALTH CARDS

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a question for the Minister of Health. Minister, you'll know that on several occasions I have risen in this House and brought to your attention the numerous wounds that continue to plague Ontario's health card system.

Recently, I was contacted by a doctor who told me that he was aware that OHIP, in early 1992, sent 400 health cards to one address in Ontario. Last week, I contacted your OHIP officials in Kingston to make them aware of what this doctor had told me. I ask you, given that you have never been able to give me an exact dollar figure on the extent of fraud in the health card system, have you at least been able to determine whether or not 400 health cards were mailed to one individual at one address?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm shocked at that accusation. If the member in fact wrote to my office, I have not received any indication from the member. I would really hope that he would provide me with the name of the doctor and the address, and I can assure the House that I will look into that and make sure that that, if it happened, never happens again.

Mr Jim Wilson: As I indicated in my question to the minister, I did phone and speak to your OHIP officials last week in Kingston. I'm shocked that you're unable to manage the system, that you're unable to check out these allegations to discover whether or not 400 health cards had been mailed to one individual. I hope you'll get back and report to this House immediately, because that could spell millions of dollars of fraud to the health card system.

My supplementary refers to Saturday's Montreal Gazette, in which it was reported that health officials in Quebec have launched an investigation to determine whether members of the Akwesasne native reserve are eligible for health care benefits in Quebec.

As you know, this reserve borders Quebec, New York and Ontario, and the Quebec government is concerned that some residents of Akwesasne could be American citizens who are registered under Quebec's health plan;

in fact, as many as 900 residents could be American citizens who are illegally registered in either Quebec or Ontario. A Quebec medicare board investigator was quoted as saying it is possible that some might be registered with both Quebec and Ontario.

Minister, are you carrying out a similar investigation to that which has been launched in Quebec and, if not, why not?

Hon Mrs Grier: Let me first of all make it clear that the majority of residents of Akwesasne are permanent residents of the province of Ontario and therefore are entitled to be covered by the Ontario health insurance plan. In those cases where there may be some questions as to their eligibility, then I can assure the member that, yes, an investigation is being done, and because of that, I really have no further comment to make.

Mr Jim Wilson: In my final supplementary, I want to point out to the minister that last Thursday's Toronto Sun reported that your ministry's bureaucrats have decided to change the health card system and bring in a new system featuring photo ID.

It's encouraging to see that at long last, at least someone in government has realized that the system that was brought in by the Liberals is completely flawed and needs to be overhauled. But what is not encouraging is that the decision to go forward with photo ID was apparently made in mid-June, yet your cabinet may not be approving the new photo ID system till at least the end of August.

You know I've raised this particular issue on seven different occasions in the House. Your own studies show a potential fraud of some \$10 million per week in this province. Your foot-dragging could be costing the taxpayers of Ontario millions of precious health care dollars. I ask you, why aren't you proceeding immediately with the new photo ID system?

Hon Mrs Grier: First of all, the member has raised very exaggerated figures with respect to misuse of OHIP cards in the past. I have acknowledged that there is in fact misuse, and for that reason have instructed officials within the ministry to begin to examine an alternative to the current health card.

But when the member says a decision was made in June and the issue won't be before cabinet until August, I would remind him that this is a cabinet government, and if cabinet has not yet dealt with the issue, then no decision has been made. We are examining a number of ways of improving the health card system. A photo ID is certainly one that I want to take a very careful look at, but no final decision has yet been made.

1410

PRODUCE-YOUR-OWN BEER AND WINE

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): I don't know if the Premier knows what this is: It's an empty. It's what

some people in Ontario use to fill at the you-brews in the stores across this province.

Unfortunately, this is as empty as the budget promise to create jobs in your introduction on page 1 of the budget. This weekend your tax grab in the spring budget will cost the you-brews jobs. This weekend your 26-cent-a-litre tax will go on the you-brews.

My question is this: Do you have any idea how many you-brews will close as a result of the tax grab that was introduced in the spring budget?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): Mr Speaker, I'm just getting a late communiqué here that will help the Premier through a difficult moment.

This tax was brought in to create a sense of balance in the overall industry. The member will of course appreciate that to have one segment of the industry untaxed and to have other sectors of the industry paying a level of tax creates an unfairness. That's a fundamental reality of the situation we face.

With the expansion of the number of brew-on-premises and other places, obviously it was a feeling of many, including many in the industry, I would say to the honourable member, that some steps had to be taken to provide for a degree of fairness. I would say to the honourable member that the fact is that the tax on this kind of beer as opposed to other kinds of beer still gives a tax advantage to the people you mentioned.

Mr Carr: The problem is that in your budget this spring you said you were going to put people back to work. The Brew on Premise Association of Ontario says that your 26-cent-a-litre tax will kill 40% of the businesses; that 40% of the businesses will close as a direct result of this tax in your spring budget. And why? All so your Treasurer, Floyd, can get \$5 million in new taxes; that is all the result will be.

Is it worth putting 40% of the industry out, closing, losing jobs? Is it worth losing 40% of an industry just so you can get \$5 million in new tax revenue?

Hon Mr Rae: First of all, I would say to the honourable member that I certainly appreciate the fact that he comes armed with numbers and statistics provided by the group the Brew on Premise Association of Ontario. I would say to him that the assumption behind the numbers I think is something one would want to at least look at. I certainly wouldn't want to leap to the conclusion that the member is correct in the assertion that the tax will have the impact that is being described.

I would say to the honourable member that we have to look at a number of factors. First of all, we have to look at the relative fairness of a tax as it affects the entire brewing industry. We have to look at the entire wine and beer industry and look at all of those together. We have to recognize that the very efficient, effective and increasingly well-known and now world-exported wine industry in the province pays a tax. They pay a

share of revenues to the province. Others pay a share of revenue to the province. Of course, when a tax has not been imposed in the past, when there are new taxes imposed, people don't initially take too kindly to it.

I think the lesson of experience would be that one should not overreact to what is, it seems to me, done in the interests of trying to create a sense of fairness in the industry and also recognize that, as I say, even with the tax that was contained in the Treasurer's budget, we're not looking at a huge imposition. We're looking at an imposition which is still going to be substantially less than would be the case, and than is the case, in the rest of the industry, and substantially less, for example, than we're charging the wineries.

Mr Carr: I'm sure the people who are in that industry will be very reassured by that, the people who will be losing their jobs. The problem is that small business has been the backbone in this province for many years. You-brews were one of the few growing businesses here in the province of Ontario.

There aren't many pleasures left in Bob Rae's Ontario, and you couldn't leave well enough alone. You have no regard for the jobs that are going to be lost. You don't even know how many jobs are going to be lost; you couldn't even give us an indication here today. There's no regard for small businesses. My question to the Premier is this: For the sake of the people who work in the you-brew industry, will you cancel the tax so that August 1 does not become last call for this industry in the province of Ontario?

Hon Mr Rae: I would say to the honourable member—and I appreciate these very helpful notes provided by the taxation policy branch at the Ministry of Finance, and I express my appreciation publicly to it—that a case of 24 at a regular beer store is now going for \$26.40 and that a case of 24 at a you-brew, after the tax increase, will now be the grand total of \$15.85, which means that August 1, 1993, it costs you 60% of the cost of regular beer. There's still a substantial consumer saving if that's what consumers choose to do, to produce their own. There's still a substantial saving there if that's what people choose to do, but it means that there's—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Rae: The member's quite right. There's no longer going to be a completely free ride and the cost will go up from being about 52% of the cost of a case of 24 to about 60% of the cost of 24, still a substantial saving to the consumer, if that's what the consumer chooses to do, but a guarantee of fairness across the board as it relates to the industry. I think we have an obligation to do that rather than simply parrot the numbers and arguments that are made by those who have an interest in seeing those arguments presented.

CHARITABLE GAMING

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I'd like to ask the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations if she would confirm, as all of the people who read the Hamilton Spectator, as I do, already know, that there are roving casinos that are available for play in the Hamilton-Wentworth area up to seven days a week at 10 different locations. I would like to know, on the very day that we begin our casino bill, whether or not she sees any need to continue with her casino bill, bearing in mind that people are operating these roving casinos for the benefit of local charities in several cities around the province.

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): When I introduced the new Gaming Services Act last year, we introduced some new guidelines and regulations around charitable Monte Carlo nights. This was after consultation with many of the over 50,000 charities out there which raise money for their charities and churches through these kinds of events. We came up with some new guidelines.

It's quite true that there are still some wrinkles to be ironed out in terms of the huge growth in that charitable industry, and we're working on that. But these kinds of roving casinos he's talking about are not in fact full-blown casinos. They do not involve video lottery terminals, for instance. They are table games primarily. We are working with the industry to iron out some of the problems, but it in no way is the same thing as the kind of casino we're going to be building in Windsor.

1420

Mr Elston: I think that's precisely the point. The minister and the government have maintained that these casinos are to raise money particularly for public purposes. Already we know that charities are using the casino nights in various of our communities to do the fund-raising they need to do good local work. The wrinkles that this minister has pointed out need to be removed are the wrinkles that don't give the government of Ontario the major take on all the work that's done by volunteers around the province.

I want the minister to tell us today that she is not going to proceed with this casino legislation and put out of business the charitable casino operations which all our communities are sponsoring, put out of business the racing employees around the province; in fact, put everybody out of business but the government of this province so that it can take the money and do with it what the New Democrats want to do for their own political partisan purposes.

Hon Ms Churley: Once again, the member of the opposition is taking this whole thing out of perspective. The whole gaming industry in Ontario is a \$4-billion industry at this time. That includes horse racing. That includes charitable gaming in church halls and for charities. That includes the lotteries. This is one pilot

project we're talking about in Windsor. In fact, with the Windsor charities, we made a commitment that we would not hold bingos in the casino, in that most of the charities in Windsor hold bingos. We made that commitment. So this has to be kept in perspective.

Charitable gaming has blossomed considerably within the past couple of years, partly because of what we have done as a government to make it more accessible and easier for them to compete in the marketplace.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): My question is to the Attorney General. Are you aware that the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act can be used by incarcerated criminals to obtain information from crown files?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): The act is intended for the use of any citizen who is attempting to gain the information to which he or she is entitled as a citizen.

Mr Harnick: The answer surprises me. The fact is that convicted criminals can gain access to crown prosecutors' files. They can gain access to the names and addresses of informants and of victims of crime. When the process comes to the crown attorney two or three or five years later, that crown attorney may not be there any longer. He or she may have moved on, or after prosecuting thousands of other cases, may not have any recollection of this particular case. How are you permitting this to go on, and go on in a way that is not protecting victims of crime?

Hon Mrs Boyd: Under the act, the ministry to which a request is directed must look at the file that's concerned. There has to be an assessment that is made as to the kind of information that is going to be released, to protect individuals who are named in those files. That happens in every kind of file that's looked at under freedom of information.

It may well be that the particular crown attorney has moved ahead, but there are supervising crown attorneys who would then do the task. I would suggest to the member, given his experience with knowing what legal case files are like, that it is very important for him to understand that the protection of privacy is just as much a part of this act as the freedom of information, and that the protection of privacy of those who might be harmed in these instances can be protected by the ministry. Obviously there are appeals to that, but that is in fact what does happen.

MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

Mr Peter North (Elgin): My question is for the Minister of Health. Over the past nine months there has been a considerable amount of concern in my riding, the riding of Elgin, and some of the other ridings that are around us such as Norfolk, Chatham-Kent and Essex-Kent, and I think across the province as a whole, as to

the downsizing of psychiatric hospitals in Ontario. I am aware of the lengthy consultations which have been carried out by your ministry staff with regard to this matter. Madam Minister, could you inform the House today of the results of those consultations?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): There have certainly been consultations and there has been a base budget review that was undertaken last year. Recommendations contained in that report on the St Thomas-London psychiatric hospital are still under consideration, so I can't give the member a definitive answer today, but I can assure him that those recommendations will be considered within the context of all mental health services in the region and the provincial mental health reform initiative.

Mr North: Madam Minister, you mentioned the word "consider." I hope that the people in the ministry and yourself will consider very strongly that Elgin county and the surrounding areas have not fared well in terms of economics during the recession. We have had great difficulties in keeping the unemployment numbers from increasing dramatically. The real numbers, I think, are somewhere in the 22% range. For us, that's very, very difficult.

There have been, as you know, a lot of rumours that either London or St Thomas or both, or something, is going to happen in the area. We have employment numbers around 800 at the St Thomas Psychiatric Hospital, so at this point it would probably, aside from the Ford plant, be considered our largest employer. I ask you very directly, Minister, on behalf of my constituents, will the St Thomas Psychiatric Hospital be closing, yes or no?

Hon Mrs Grier: I suspected, in my answer to the member's first question, that he might be thinking of just a definitive yes or no. I regret that I'm unable to give him a yes or no answer at this point.

But I am aware, let me assure him, of the important role this hospital plays in the region which he so ably represents. Let me assure him and his constituents that any future decisions about the hospital will be made in consultation with not only senior management at the hospital, but with all the people who work there, and will comply with the terms set out in the collective agreement which the ministry has and will be consistent with the restructuring of hospital services and the policies that cover those.

WATER QUALITY

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a question for the Minister of Environment and Energy. The Minister of Environment will recall that in the winter of 1987, after several months of extremely difficult negotiations and after Ontario stood alone to hold out against a very weak agreement, finally a good agreement was signed for the cleanup of the Niagara River. The Niagara River, he would recognize, flows

into Lake Ontario, which is the source of drinking water and recreational water for millions of people from Ontario and from New York State.

Now, even today, high levels of PCBs, dioxins and other hazardous chemicals are continuing to show up in the flesh of mussels exposed to the Niagara River. I ask the Minister of Environment if we can tell the House whether he is satisfied with the degree of progress which has been forthcoming in fulfilling the agreement between the four parties, and if not, what specific action he is taking to ensure a speedup in the cleanup of the Niagara River.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): I'm sorry, I didn't hear the first part of the member's question. I just received a note regarding the question his colleague posed earlier to the effect that Ontario Hydro has cancelled the contract to which the member referred.

The member raises a very important question. I know that he is personally very interested and concerned about it, and I know that as Minister of the Environment he played a very important role in raising the concerns and taking action to clean up the Niagara River.

He will know that there has been some improvement. He asked me if I'm satisfied. No, I'm not satisfied until we have a clean bill of health for the Niagara River, but the member will know that largely due to the work of the ministry and the other officials on both sides of the river, Ontario industries and municipalities show a 95% reduction in persistent toxic chemicals known to be a problem in the river. We are not satisfied, but we are making some progress.

1430

Mr Bradley: The minister will know that American authorities have put forward a program which is designed to clean up, specifically, the dump sites which are the main source of pollution for the Niagara River. In fact Ontario and Canada have consistently had a better record than others in dealing with those issues in terms of the Niagara River.

In light of the fact that Dr Ian Brindle, a chemist at Brock University, a past chairman of the remedial action committee on the Canadian side governing the Niagara River, has said that the US plans are "a whitewash job" and "a bunch of rubbish," will the Minister of Environment and Energy undertake to endeavour to get a meeting immediately with the commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation of New York state and authorities of the US federal government under the Environmental Protection Agency to insist, on behalf of the people of Ontario and ultimately the people of Canada, that the United States take far more drastic action to clean up those dump sites and that it do it in an expeditious fashion?

Hon Mr Wildman: The member is correct in his

comments that the monitoring studies by the Ministry of Environment and Energy in Ontario show that persistent toxic contaminants continue to enter the Niagara River, mostly from sources on the American side of the river.

The member also knows that the COA agreement expired at the end of March 1991 and was extended on an interim basis to the end of March 1993. On this side of the river, we must deal with the problem of the fact there is some concern between the provincial government and the federal authorities as to how we should properly share the cost of fulfilling the requirements.

It is very important if we enter into international agreements with the United States authorities, the federal and state authorities on the American side, that the federal government in Canada ensure that that government is making a proper contribution to the cost of the remedial action required on the Ontario side of the river.

We will be meeting later next month in August with the new federal minister and his officials to try to ensure there is a fair sharing of the cost. I'll take as notice and under advisement the member's suggestion that we should meet directly with the American authorities and I will report back to the House later.

CASINO GAMBLING

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations with respect to the issue of casino gambling. Prior to September 1990 when the last provincial election was held, the Premier of the province was quoted as saying, "The casino plays on greed." On May 17 of this year my leader asked the Premier if your government would hold a referendum on whether or not casino gambling should be introduced into the province of Ontario. The Premier said no.

When a government turns its back on the very principles and reasons it was elected to power, should not that government give the public an opportunity to express its opinion?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): I believe the Premier has said, and I certainly have said, that no casino would go to any community which did not demonstrate its wishes for a casino to be in that community. Windsor has had many consultations with the people of Windsor, and in fact the city council has made it very clear to us its overwhelming interest in that community. However, we have said that we would move very slowly and cautiously to make sure that if and when casino gambling is extended, we will look at ways that communities can be sure the people of their community are interested in having a casino.

But I want to say that every day there are thousands of Ontarians travelling outside of this province and spending millions of dollars of money outside of this

country. It's not a question any more of hiding our heads in the sand and pretending that casino gambling doesn't exist. It's starting to spread out all across Canada and in the United States, so we have to look very carefully at where we're going with this. But of course we will make sure that a community is fully supportive of having a casino.

Mr Eves: The minister steadfastly refuses to answer this question directly, because I suspect that she knows her government said one thing before the election and one thing after the election.

On three separate occasions the state of Michigan has provided the people of Detroit with a vote on whether or not to establish a casino. The people of Detroit have rejected it three times. In Mississippi there have been two referendums on the establishment of a casino; the first one failed, the second one was successful.

In Colorado, Connecticut, Indiana, Illinois, Florida, Missouri, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio and South Dakota referendums were held on the establishment of casino gambling. Some won; some lost. Why won't you give the people of Ontario and the people of Windsor the same democratic right that the people in these states have had?

Hon Ms Churley: The people of Windsor spoke through their city council loudly and clearly. We did a lot of work to make sure that the people of Windsor wanted a casino in that town. Referendums are part of the American system.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. Would the minister take her seat, please.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon Ms Churley: Referendums, as we know, are part of the American system much more than here in Canada. You haven't said anything about Quebec, which is in the process of opening up casinos. You haven't said anything about Manitoba. You haven't said anything about Alberta. You haven't said anything about BC. You haven't said anything about the Yukon. All those jurisdictions within Canada have casinos and they didn't call referendums. We have a different kind of system than in the United States.

Mr Eves: You are part of the New Democratic Party, are you? What's new and what's democratic about it?

The Speaker: Order, the member for Parry Sound.

Hon Ms Churley: As I said before, we will be paying close attention and making sure that any community which, down the road, gets a casino—that is, if we decide to expand—will be thoroughly consulted.

ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): My question

is for the Minister of Health. Recently it has been brought to my attention by a constituent in my riding of Wentworth North the terrible suffering that people with environmental sensitivities have to endure, not only as a result of their condition but also at the hands of uninformed health professionals. I would like to know what your ministry is doing to address this situation.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I appreciate an opportunity to speak on this issue, because I agree with the member that it is in fact suffering for a great many people. Environmental sensitivities encompass a number of conditions which have been difficult to address for many reasons, some of which have to do with a lack of understanding about the nature of the illnesses.

The ministry wishes to contribute to greater understanding of these and of the people affected by them. I have approved funding for the establishment of a joint clinical research program where individuals with sensitivities may come for complete assessment and appropriate referral and where research on diagnosis, treatment and prevention can take place.

We've also approved the establishment of a new provincial committee with a very broad representation, including consumer groups, which will develop and distribute information material for health care providers and consumers. This follows upon many previous initiatives in the Ministry of Health to promote more understanding of this condition.

Mr Abel: How do these initiatives help people who are suffering now as I speak? How will this help people who, in addition to their illness, are put through more pain as a result of inaccurate diagnosis?

Hon Mrs Grier: I appreciate the member's concern. He's right. There aren't any quick and easy solutions for the victims of these often extremely debilitating illnesses. However, we are attempting to increase awareness among the medical community, not only awareness of the condition and its serious effects, but also about the avenues that are now open to practitioners right now for more appropriate detection and treatment.

I hope that as awareness increases among doctors and others, these professionals could, where appropriate, begin to rule out environmental causes before moving to consider other diagnoses, for example.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I have a question for the Minister of Health. This question deals with the issue of ambulance service in my area. I think you should be aware that, though you have frozen the budget of an independent ambulance service, the only ambulance service in my area, you and your government have increased the cost of running that ambulance service.

You have increased the cost by virtue of increasing salaries of attendants, you have increased the cost through increases in premiums of the WCB, you have increased the cost through your new tax on auto insurance premiums and you have increased the cost through the new tax, the sales tax on health premiums.

1440

The impact of this is that the ambulance service can now no longer replace an attendant when that person happens to be on sick leave, on compensation or indeed on vacation. This has severe consequences, two in fact; the first is that if two attendants happen to be absent, then one ambulance is taken off the road. The area that I represent has but two ambulances, so one of two is taken off the road. The second consequence is that if one attendant is absent, then an ambulance is staffed by only one person. An ambulance with only a driver attends to the scene of any occurrence.

My question to the Minister of Health is, as the Minister of Health, is it adequate that an ambulance with only one person in it attends at the scene of an emergency?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm not going to give a categorical answer to that kind of question. But let me say to the member that as we constrain expenditures in every area of the public service, it is incumbent upon all of those involved to examine the way in which they operate and to examine the functions that they carry out and to reallocate funding to those that are most critical and certainly to those that meet emergencies.

I would suggest to the member that within that service there have to be ways of looking at what is most critical and how that service can be provided, because I would agree with him that the provision of emergency services is a basic responsibility of government at all levels.

Mr Offer: By way of supplementary, it's strange that the Minister of Health cannot give a categorical answer. The question is, is it appropriate that an ambulance attend at the scene with only one person? God forbid it should happen to any one of us with any of our loved ones. Is it appropriate that an ambulance come to our home or to the scene of an accident with only one person? What type of emergency service can be performed by only the driver?

Madam Minister, it does require a categorical answer from you. You must stand up and say that it is inappropriate that an ambulance has only one person in the car at any time and that you have mandated, through your ministry, that in my area and in all areas—I'll use mine—there are two cars that must be on the road.

Madam Minister, are you going to stand by your own ministry's mandate? The question is important to thousands and thousands of people who may require

emergency ambulance services. An ambulance with one person in it will not provide that service. Madam Minister, stand up and tell us, is that appropriate?

Hon Mrs Grier: What I said in my first answer was that we all have to look at how we do things, and all levels of government have to find how in fact they can do better with less.

If in fact a fire engine and a police car are at an accident and it is as yet unknown that it is a serious accident, there may be occasions where one person from the ambulance is appropriate; there are many other occasions where it is inappropriate. If the ambulance is the only vehicle responding, I would agree with him there would have to be more than a driver in the ambulance. But I don't know the circumstances he is describing. I don't accept that what he is describing applies in every particular circumstance.

I agree with him that emergency services are critical components of our health and our safety systems and, as municipalities, private sector ambulances and the ministry look carefully at how they can constrain their costs, they have to take the critical nature of those services into consideration.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): My question is again to the Minister of Health, and it concerns the health sector social contract and its impact, for example, on the homes for the aged.

The health sector agreement was approved by this government, was signed by the government and was signed by the union before the employers even had the opportunity to look at it and to comment on it, and of course it was rejected by the employers.

It indicated that the powers of the joint workplace committee should be expanded and that the powers of the union would therefore be expanded in terms of its influence on the running of our health care facilities, facilities such as homes for the aged. These additional union powers would impact on planning, on budgeting and on human resources planning, and they would in fact not only be temporary powers but would be permanent powers beyond the term of the social contract.

The municipalities have said they do not want the unions running our cities. Now the health care sector is saying it does not want the unions running our homes for the aged and our hospitals.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member place a question, please.

Mr David Johnson: The question is, why is the government attempting to force these greater union powers on the health care system, such as the homes for the aged?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): As the member knows, we are still discussing the terms of the social contract. The deadline is not until August 1, and

I still believe an agreement can be reached in that entire sector.

But the principle of involving the employees and using the talents, the skills and the experience of the employees in any institution as we try to find ways of saving money and performing our services better is a principle that we completely support. I am surprised that he, as well as the employers in nursing homes, would want to disregard the ability of the people who work with them and not want to take advantage of every opportunity to work coherently in a coordinated way to achieve savings and better management.

Mr David Johnson: Of course the municipalities and the health sector use every opportunity to hear what the employees are saying. But they do not want greater mandated or legislated authorities to the unions. That was the issue with the municipalities—they spoke loud and clear—and this government backtracked.

The health sector is saying it wants an agreement based on the municipal model. The municipal model permits the government to obtain its prime objective, which is to reduce spending, but at the same time it does not restrict management abilities in our health care system.

Again, the homes for the aged do not want legislated union authority in terms of planning, budgeting, and human resources planning.

The Speaker: Could the member place a supplementary.

Mr David Johnson: Madam Minister, my question to you today is, will you permit the health sector to have an agreement based on the municipal model?

Hon Mrs Grier: This is not the social contract negotiating table. I'm sure the member is aware, as I said in response to his first question, that discussions with respect to the social contract are proceeding and will proceed until the end of this week. I still remain optimistic that it may be possible to gain an agreement in that sector.

I would point out to him that the municipal sector has signed an agreement. And when he says that municipalities and all institutions work with their employees, I would suggest to him that that is not perhaps as even across the entire sector as he might wish to believe, and that if it were working as effectively as he implied, then there would be no need to try to negotiate or to find a way of making sure that happens. But I would say to him that it is not my intention to do these negotiations either on the floor of this Legislature or in public.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): My question is to the Minister of Health. I've been approached by a number of pharmacists in my area who have some real concerns about Bill 29.

This bill gives cabinet authority to set dispensing fees

under the Ontario drug benefit program, and the minister has actually rejected a fact-finder's report that called for a 3% increase in fees retroactive to December 1991.

I understand that there is a need to exercise restraint, given the fiscal outlook for the province and the sacrifices that are being required in the broader public sector. None the less, the pharmacists feel they don't have enough input. Will the minister assure this House and the pharmacists in my area and across the province that their ideas and suggestions on controlling the cost of drugs and their dispensation would receive fair consideration and that they will be consulted fully before any changes are made to dispensing fees, the schedule?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Yes.

1450

PETITIONS SOCIAL CONTRACT

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I have a petition that has been handed to me by hundreds of people in my riding of Quinte, which is the Trenton-Belleville-Frankford area, and it reads:

"To the Honourable Lieutenant Governor, Legislative Assembly of Ontario, from the people of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That free and open collective bargaining for public service employees be restored and be returned to its honourable position in Ontario;

"That the social contract in its present form be destroyed and that the valuable programs and services in the public sector be maintained for the betterment of all Ontarians; and

"That the government withdraw Bill 48, and in place of this bill the government work cooperatively with the public service unions to find an equitable solution rather than eliminating valuable public services."

HEALTH CARE

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario

Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

I have affixed my signature.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition on the letterhead of the Oxford County Medical Association. It has been sent to me by Dr Munnoch in my riding and has about 150 names on it. They want the government to withdraw proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): I have a petition to the members of the provincial Parliament:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition to wide-open Sunday business.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day would be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on retailers, retail employees and their families.

"The proposed amendments to the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter from the definition of legal holiday and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

I affix my signature to this petition.

GO BUS SERVICE

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): On behalf of my colleague David Tilson, MPP for Dufferin-Peel, I'd like to table a petition signed by a number of his constituents which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To object to the recent cuts to GO Transit bus service to Woodbridge, Kleinburg, Nobleton, Bolton, Palgrave and Highway 9; and

"Whereas this will be a major inconvenience to non-drivers; and

"Whereas it will have a negative impact on the local economy; and

"Whereas the lack of transit services will increase traffic, thereby increasing air pollution levels at a time when all levels of government are making efforts to reduce pollution and encourage the public transportation system; and

"Whereas the cuts leave no alternative means of commuting in and out of Toronto during peak hours; and

"Whereas the lack of GO buses will force passengers, at one of the worst economic times in Ontario's history, to incur extra expenses, finding another form of transportation;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to overturn GO Transit's decision and restore GO Transit service to Woodbridge, Kleinburg, Nobleton, Bolton and Highway 9."

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): Again, I read one of the many thousands of petitions I've brought to this House:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

It's my great pleasure to affix my name to this petition.

HEALTH CARE

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and economic agreement."

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will enable government to

unilaterally and arbitrarily restrict payments for psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality mental health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw the proposal to restrict payments for psychotherapy and withdraw the proposal to allow the cabinet to make decisions with respect to the number of times patients may receive particular insured services and set maximums with respect thereto. The government of Ontario must reaffirm its commitment to the process of joint management and rational reform of the delivery of medical services in the province as specified under the Ontario Medical Association/government framework agreement."

I concur with this petition and affix my name to it.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. This petition is signed by 235 members of my riding of Sarnia and surrounding area. The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Whereas the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the 1991 Ontario Medical Association/government framework and econ-

omic agreement."

I have signed the petition.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The expenditure control plan announced in the Legislature by Treasurer Floyd Laughren on April 23, 1993, includes reductions in health care services by \$4 billion. This means that the Ontario drug benefit program is in jeopardy. We quote:

"The reform on the Ontario drug benefits program will result in a savings of \$195 million.' To be reformed are pharmacy services, prescribing guidelines, management of nutritional products and over-the-counter products. There will also be price changes and cost-sharing.

"We therefore request that the House refrain from supporting this piece of legislation which will result in a serious burden to senior citizens in Ontario."

There are 165 signatures on this petition and I will sign it on their behalf.

1500

HEALTH CARE

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have another petition submitted by a member of the Oxford County Medical Association. It's sent to me by Dr M. Dowdee, and it's similar to the petition I read in earlier. It has about 40 names on it.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of health care; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw these proposed measures and reaffirm its commitment to rational reform of Ontario's health care system through its obligations under the Ontario Medical Association-government framework and economic agreement."

It is signed by 230 residents of Brant county and the city of Brantford. I affix my signature.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact upon access to and the delivery of psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will enable government to unilaterally and arbitrarily restrict payments for psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe reduction in the provision of quality mental health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The government of Ontario move immediately to withdraw the proposal to restrict payments for psychotherapy and withdraw the proposal to allow the cabinet to make decisions with respect to the number of times patients may receive particular insured services and set maximums with respect thereto. The government of Ontario must reaffirm its commitment to the process of joint management and rational reform of the delivery of medical services in the province, as specified under the Ontario Medical Association/government framework agreement."

That's signed by a number of very concerned taxpayers in this province who are worried about Bill 50 and the unilateral decisions being taken by this government. Some of those residents are with us today in the gallery. I too have affixed my name to this petition.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): I have a petition signed by 29 constituents of mine in the riding of Sarnia. The petition reads as follows:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Sarnia, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We, the undersigned, call on the Ontario government to maintain and improve our public services. Public services are vital to our communities and our way of life. We can't afford to lose them."

I've affixed my signature to the petition.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have an additional petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"Whereas proposals made under the government's expenditure control plan and social contract initiatives regarding health care in the province of Ontario will have a devastating impact on access to and the delivery of psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will enable government to unilaterally and arbitrarily restrict payments for psychotherapy; and

"Whereas these proposals will result in a severe

reduction in the provision of quality mental health care services across the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government move immediately to withdraw the proposal to restrict payments for psychotherapy and withdraw the proposal to allow the cabinet to make decisions with respect to the number of times patients may receive particular insured services and set maximums with respect thereto.

"The government of Ontario must reaffirm its commitment to the process of joint management and rational reform of the delivery of medical services in the province as specified under the Ontario Medical Association government/framework agreement."

Once again, hundreds of signatures are on this petition, and I concur with it and affix mine as well.

NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in 1923, seven Ontario bands signed the Williams Treaty, which guaranteed that native peoples would fish and hunt according to provincial and federal conservation laws, like everyone else; and

"Whereas the bands were paid the 1993 equivalent of \$20 million; and

"Whereas that treaty was upheld by Ontario's highest court last year; and

"Whereas Bob Rae is not enforcing existing laws which prohibit native peoples from hunting and fishing out of season; and

"Whereas this will put at risk an already pressured part of Ontario's environment;

"We, the undersigned, adamantly demand that the government honour the principles of fish and wildlife conservation; to respect our native and non-native ancestors and to respect the Williams Treaty."

This is signed by 501 constituents, and I also affix my signature.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): This terminates the time allotted for petitions.

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: On June 16, I placed two Order and Notices paper questions, number 224 and number 226, to the Ministry of Health, the first with respect to documentation about impact studies, consultative meetings held with respect to reducing technical fees paid to facilities and hospitals; the second requesting cost-benefit studies, health outcomes analysis and studies undertaken, consultative meetings held, surveys conducted etc with respect to the delisting of psychotherapy.

I had an indication that while the material could not

be available in the time required under standing order 97(d), a final answer would be available on or about July 14. That day has long passed, and I'm asking once again for the material that as a member I have the right to access.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Your request is on record on the order paper and indeed on a point of order here in the Legislature, and I'm quite sure officials at the Ministry of Health are looking into it.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr David Johnson from the standing committee on general government presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management / Loi modifiant certaines lois relatives aux municipalités en ce qui concerne la gestion des déchets.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

Shall Bill 7 be ordered for third reading? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

1510

ORDERS OF THE DAY

EXPENDITURE CONTROL PLAN STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LE PLAN DE CONTRÔLE DES DÉPENSES

Mrs Grier moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 50, An Act to implement the Government's expenditure control plan and, in that connection, to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act / Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre le Plan de contrôle des dépenses du gouvernement et modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé et la Loi sur l'arbitrage des conflits de travail dans les hôpitaux.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the minister have some opening remarks?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Mr Speaker, just before the minister commences her opening remarks, two things: I believe we have consent to sit till 8:30 this evening.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have agreement to sit until 8:30 this evening? Agreed.

Hon Mr Charlton: Secondly, I believe we have an agreement to adjourn the debate on this bill, Bill 50, and to move then to the debate on Bill 8, the casinos act, at 6 o'clock.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have agreement to

cease debate on Bill 50 at 6 o'clock and begin the Bill 8 debate? We have agreement.

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): This motion is for second reading of Bill 50, the Expenditure Control Plan Statute Law Amendment Act, and this, as the title says, is an act to implement the government's expenditure control plan, and connected to that, to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act.

Reforming our health care system is a critical part of our government's agenda. That reform has four central elements: first, to place a greater emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention; secondly, to manage the health care system so that it remains affordable and effective; thirdly, to improve accessibility and to meet the needs of special groups within our population; and fourthly, to strengthen partnerships with health providers as well as the community.

Bill 50 is consistent with that health reform strategy and will enable the government to meet its targeted expenditure reductions.

The first major challenge we faced as we moved to implement our health reform strategy was restructuring the hospital system, and this has also been our greatest success. When hospitals were forced to trim their budgets a couple of years ago, critics sounded the alarm bells, unnecessarily, as it turned out, and today we see more efficient hospitals offering better quality care. We've seen that because of great achievements from hospital administrators and hospital workers.

The average length of stay in a hospital has fallen from nine days in 1988 to seven days today. The number of people treated has increased by almost 8%, or about one million cases, with more cases being served on an outpatient basis. Day surgery, as a percentage of all surgeries, has risen from 53% to 70%, and we also have in place a five-year reform plan that includes reorganizing services on a regional basis to eliminate duplication, work that is being spearheaded by the district health councils across the province.

I believe our success in the hospital sector is due in large part to the constructive role of the Ontario Hospital Association through the joint policy and planning committee, the local and regional planning that, as I say, is being done by district health councils, and a much more open decision-making process at each hospital through the implementation of operating guidelines.

In the early life of this government a framework agreement was signed with the Ontario Medical Association, and that again was a very important step in our reform of the health care system. That agreement created two very important tools, tools that enable us and the Ontario Medical Association to manage the ministry in a way that improves effectiveness as well as

controlling costs. One of those tools is the joint management committee, working very effectively, and another is the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences, known as ICES. This institute, about which I believe not enough is yet known by the people of this province, provides us with technical information to help doctors to do their jobs better. Research conducted on issues such as small variations in coronary surgery rates and ultrasound examinations will help improve the quality and effectiveness of our medical services.

Earlier this year, again consistent with our reform agenda, I announced two major policy frameworks, that for long-term care as well as a strategy for mental health reform, and we recently released a discussion paper on reform of the Ontario drug benefit plan.

Work has also begun on development of a primary health services framework that will help us ensure that basic health care is effective and truly accessible. This policy is part of the ongoing work on a community health framework and will look at the role of physicians and other health care professionals such as nurses, pharmacists, chiropractors and midwives and what role they should play in primary health services.

We are very proud, and I think the people of Ontario can be proud, of the progress that has been made in the last two years, because only by reforming the health care system to manage it better can we continue to afford it and also provide every citizen with high-quality care.

The current fiscal situation forces us to face an inescapable truth: Our system is the most expensive publicly funded system in the world. Between 1982 and 1992, the Ministry of Health's budget increased annually by 10% and doubled to the \$17.8 billion it stands at today. If we keep spending as though the sky were the limit, we will not have a universal health care system to pass on to our children and our children's children, because the system would become unsustainable.

Last year, we kept growth in spending to an increase of 1%. This year, with our expenditure control measures as well as savings in the public sector payroll achieved through the social contract, the budget will increase by just 0.1%, an amazing achievement.

However, I think it's important for everyone to understand that Ministry of Health spending in 1993-94 will still be more than \$17 billion, or one third of the provincial budget. So our task is not only to keep health expenditures under control, but to bring costs down while at the same time reallocating money from one sector of health care to another.

We do that in order to be able to meet the needs of the aging population, of people with AIDS or for more community-based services, in order to fill the gaps that have for too many years been allowed to develop. I believe this presents us with an opportunity to deal with

a situation that has been ignored for too long while at the same time advancing our health reform agenda.

For years Canada's provincial and federal governments have been hearing the warning calls from health economists and planners, as well as from doctors and other health professionals, that spending on health care was getting out of hand and that some of the money was not being spent as wisely as it could be.

One prominent health policy expert, Jonathan Lomas, who coordinates the Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis at McMaster University, has said that he would like to see ministries of health across Canada move from simply being insurers and payers to becoming managers. We believe the job of government is to invest in health, not merely to pay the bills, and that's what our reform agenda is all about.

One fact that ministries of health across Canada ignored as long ago as the mid-1970s was that the growth in the number of physicians was far outstripping the growth in the population. This imbalance came from health planning decisions made 30 years ago, when the planned growth of physicians was designed for 37 million people, not the 27 million we have in Canada today.

In Ontario the increase in physicians has been more tied to our capacity to train doctors than to our population needs. There has been a lack of planning and management resulting in shortages of specialists in some areas and an oversupply in others.

For example, there was a 46% increase in paediatricians between 1981 and 1989, but only a 4% increase in their young patients. Meanwhile, there's a growing need for health services in the areas of geriatrics and chronic diseases. We saw a 33% overall increase in doctors, but we still have communities that have no doctors: 24 years of incentive plans have not been able to get enough doctors to rural and northern communities.

1520

Even in the past three months, despite the publicity and controversy that there has been about our proposals to try to redistribute physicians to areas where they are needed, we have been forced to bring in doctors from other provinces, from Australia, Israel, the United Kingdom, South Africa and the United States: bring in doctors to work where our own doctors don't want to go. As well, Ontario has specific populations that remain chronically underserved, such as women, native people, AIDS sufferers and francophones.

Physician resource management has long been under discussion by every health ministry across the country. In 1991, professors Morris Barer and Greg Stoddart submitted a report to all of the provincial and the federal ministers of health. It was called *Toward Integrated Medical Resource Policies for Canada*, and

the recommendations in that report have played a significant role in provincial strategies to deal with physician resource management.

Last February, Ontario's universities agreed to enrol 70 fewer medical students, starting this fall. The ministry also announced better ways to control entry into the health system of graduates of foreign medical schools who come to Canada as visa trainees.

But development of a policy to better manage our human resources has only just begun. There needs to be a broad discussion, and some of that is occurring through the recently created Provincial Coordinating Committee on Postgraduate Medical Education. That committee, chaired by Dr John Evans, includes people from district health councils, from academic health science centres, hospitals, as well as organizations representing physicians. The committee will look at the issues related to post-graduate medical education and the management of physician resources, and I want to say that so far I'm extremely encouraged by the work that committee has done.

The second thing we have to do is to encourage payment approaches or means of payment that give us much greater flexibility than the current fee-for-service system.

Thirdly, we need to ensure a much more effective match of needs and resources.

This brings us to Bill 50, legislation that is not for the purpose of allowing government to practise medicine, as I'm sure members will hear in the debate this afternoon, nor does it allow the government to stop paying for medically necessary services. In fact, the Canada Health Act ensures that we provide medically necessary services, along with reasonable access to them, for all our permanent residents.

The legislative amendments we have proposed clarify the authority required to proceed with the types of proposals that have been made under the expenditure control plan.

With respect to the changes to the Health Insurance Act, the amendments are the first major changes to the act since 1972. These changes will allow for better management of the health insurance plan, and some would argue that they are long overdue.

This legislation is a fail-safe mechanism to ensure that the government can meet its fiscal targets in the event that we cannot reach agreement through negotiations with the Ontario Medical Association. These negotiations with the OMA have been taking place for some time, very intensely, and indeed are occurring as I speak.

We have proposed a number of measures through the expenditure control plan, such as income thresholds, discounts and changes to the fee schedule. These, plus the social contract reductions, are designed to reduce the

fee-for-service budget for physicians this year to approximately \$3.6 billion, a decrease of 8.6% from last year, and we plan that they should continue to be at that level for the next two years. Expenditure control plan measures and a successful social contract will result in a decline of 7.5% from last year on payments for physicians, other fee-for-service health providers, out-of-country care and laboratories.

While I hope we can arrive at our savings through successful negotiations with the Ontario Medical Association, I want to make it clear that our target must be met. But I also want to make it very clear, once again, that with this bill the government has no intention of limiting medically necessary treatments.

I want to speak for a moment on some of the details of the three key sections of Bill 50.

First of all, there are amendments being proposed to the Health Insurance Act. Under the current act, the Minister of Health has the power to prescribe the amounts payable by the health insurance plan for insured services. We are expanding that already existing regulation-making authority to make it more precise. The expanded authority will allow us to pass regulations with respect to other matters that may be agreed upon between the government and the Ontario Medical Association.

There will be more specific authority with respect to payment, based on classes of physicians, practitioners or health facilities or where the service is rendered. We will have the authority to lower fees to new entrants, but also to pay 100% of fees to a new entrant in an underserved area or specialty.

The changes will ensure that regulations under the Health Insurance Act can control government expenditures, encourage appropriate distribution of doctors in the province and discourage doctors, practitioners and health facilities in overserved locations.

Other amendments in the Health Insurance Act will allow increases, through regulation, in the number of members of the Medical Review Committee and the practitioner review committees. The ratio of lay to professional members will be maintained.

The Medical Review Committee, at the request of the ministry, reviews cases of physicians who appear to be inappropriately submitting claims for insured services, an issue that I know all members of this House have raised and are concerned about. But I want to point out that there is currently a backlog of 49 cases at that committee and the response time is now averaging more than two years, up from seven and a half months in 1984 and 20½ months three years ago.

The committee has only eight members. In 1990, the Provincial Auditor asked the previous government to expand the committee. We are acting on that recommendation through Bill 50. We need that expansion so that

we can more quickly get back the money taxpayers have incorrectly paid to doctors who billed inappropriately.

This bill also includes amendments to the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act, amendments that require parties to share the cost of arbitrations in hospitals and nursing homes. At present the government pays the full amount of these costs, which on average has been nearly half a million dollars every year.

What we see in the health sector, where government picks up the full cost of arbitration, is 40% of negotiations going to arbitration. Contrast that with the fact that in police bargaining, where there is a sharing of costs, only 8% of cases go to arbitration.

Cost-sharing is already the norm for firefighters, teachers and community college employees. This amendment to the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act is also consistent with the policies of most other provinces where there is mandatory arbitration in the public sector.

Lastly, Bill 50 enables the government to override existing agreements where new agreements have not been reached to achieve fiscal targets. While it is not our wish to override any collective agreements, the alternative would mean a crisis for health care spending in the future, and that we cannot allow to happen.

1530

Let me close by re-emphasizing the fact that the Expenditure Control Plan Statute Law Amendment Act is a tool that will help the ministry to effectively manage the health care system. We intend to hold the line on spending for health services. We intend to preserve the best of what we have in Ontario's excellent health care system while reforming to meet new needs and new demands. Far from dismantling the system, we are making it better and making sure the taxpayers can continue to afford to pay for it.

In 1979, Tommy Douglas, whose New Democratic government in Saskatchewan introduced medicare to Canada, said that public health insurance was only the first step in the setting up of medicare. The second step, he said, would involve the reorganization of medical and health practice and an emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention. He predicted the second step would be even tougher than the first.

Our government has taken on that second step. It is not an easy task, but with discussion and participation by everyone involved in Ontario's health care system, we will succeed. This legislation is one step in that direction.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): I thank the honourable minister for her participation in the debate. Questions or comments? If there are no questions or comments, further debate?

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I listened to the comments of the Minister of Health with some

interest and was quite taken with the fact that she described Bill 50 as being a fail-safe mechanism which will entitle the government to make targeted expenditures. I did not hear her, however, in the course of her discussion talking about the implications for health care delivery which is so very much a part of the Ontario medicare participation and so important to every single person in the province.

I believe that Bill 50 has extraordinary implications for the public, for physicians, for hospitals, for the health care system generally and indeed for our medicare system as a whole. It provides the Ontario government with draconian powers to impose massive cuts on medical services and, hence, patient care. Those cuts can be made without reference to the need for such services or to whether an individual or a group of people will be adversely affected.

Through this bill, the government is giving itself the sole power to determine the circumstances and the conditions under which doctors, other practitioners and patients will be reimbursed for medical services. It would allow the Minister of Health and the government of the province to determine behind closed doors that a person could only see a doctor for a specific treatment a certain number of times. It would allow the Minister of Health to say that a doctor will not be paid for services that he or she has provided to patients.

It does not require that limitations be put on the use of doctors' services only when such services aren't really necessary. In fact, the bill gives the minister and her bureaucrats in the Ministry of Health the unilateral power to ration insured and medically necessary services no matter what the effect that rationing will have on the person who needs to receive those services, and the bill says that those cuts can be made not because those services aren't needed but simply because the minister doesn't want to pay for them. That is what this bill is all about.

The bill gives the minister the power to say where and how a doctor can practise medicine. An older doctor may have different rules to follow than a younger doctor, and those rules could be imposed without any check on the minister or the government, without negotiations with the Ontario Medical Association nor any discussion required of the efficacy of that decision.

In fact, Bill 50 overrides the framework and economic agreement which the government has with the OMA and says that whatever contractual arrangements exist for payments to doctors are of no value. They can be set aside by decree of the minister, and there is no recourse by the individual doctor nor by the association which represents all of the doctors in the province and is legally required and entitled to negotiate on their behalf.

Bill 50 doesn't end with the physicians. It also

applies to chiroprodists, dentists, chiropractors, optometrists, osteopaths and any other practitioner who is paid by OHIP for providing health care services.

Just before he was elected in 1990, Bob Rae, who was then the leader of the New Democratic Party—he's now Premier of Ontario, much to some of our regret—had this to say to the Ontario Medical Association, and this is a direct quote:

"There's no fairness in a system that allows the government to dictate unilaterally your level of pay. A monolithic system in which one insurer has all of the political cards can't work without checks and balances, professions free to speak out on the quality of care, a partnership in which planning decisions about the system emerge from a genuine dialogue and not from the cabinet room alone, and above all, a sense of fairness and pluralism when it comes to management of the system. These are all essential if the health care system is to maintain the confidence of everyone working in it, as well as the public it serves.

"Fair arbitration between the professions and the government is a critical element in creating a more open health care system. You have a right to it," Premier Rae told the doctors, "under international law and under every standard of natural justice."

I'm going to hold that quote aside because I may want to come back to it as we proceed through the debate on this bill, because this piece of legislation takes away the very checks and balances that Bob Rae spoke about when he was addressing the Ontario Medical Association.

It removes the partnership and it leaves the cabinet room in charge of how people are cared for and what medical services they can receive and when. It leaves everyone, patients and their families, physicians and other health professionals, and hospitals and health facilities at the whim of a government that is intent on slashing costs no matter what the effect.

The president of the Ontario Medical Association pointed out in a letter to all members of the Legislature on June 18 that this bill, and I just would like to quote from that letter, "gives government the power to say, for example, that if your child has an ear infection and needs more than the government-dictated number of visits, those medical services might not be covered by OHIP, or worse, might not be available at all."

He goes on to point out, "There are no limits on what services can be restricted by government under this legislation. The legislation is not specific to psychotherapy or eye examinations as originally proposed in the expenditure control plan for physician services; the power to ration insured and medically necessary services applies to everyone and everything. The number of medical services deemed appropriate can be decided unilaterally by some bureaucrat whose mandate extends

no further than saving money.”

That is precisely the crux of the problem with this bill.

Tom Walkom, who writes, as you know, for the *Toronto Star*, had a look at the bill and listened to what people were saying about it, and on July 3 he wrote a column about what's happening with Bill 50. In his column he said: “It's unclear what exactly the government hopes to win from all of this. Bill 50 would allow the cabinet to busy itself in the minutiae of deciding how many times patients can see their doctors.”

He quotes Health ministry spokesman Layne Verbeek—and I want to quote this from the column—who says, “The government has little intention of using this blunt instrument.”

If the government has no intention of using what is self-described as a blunt instrument, if the government has no intention of using the extensive and extraordinary powers which it is giving itself under this legislation, then why has this bill been drafted and why is the bill before the House? Why are we discussing this bill if the government does not intend to use the bill?

1540

My view is that indeed the government is not only committed to this law, but it intends to implement it with all its force, no matter what the consequences to any patient or to any practitioner anywhere in Ontario. Frankly, the Minister of Health made that very, very clear in her introductory remarks.

I want to ask some questions.

What about the patient? If a patient needs a medical treatment that the government has arbitrarily deemed to be not medically necessary, according to its own arbitrary standards or calculations based on cost, where will the patient be?

Will the patient have to reach into his or her own pocket to pay for medical care, perhaps because the doctor has provided that same treatment to too many others? Will the patient be refused treatment because the government has said that the treatment has been provided too many times in a geographic region and that the practitioner isn't allowed to provide that treatment again? Will the patient be forced to travel to another site to get the treatment from another care giver who perhaps hasn't met the quota, or isn't as young, or isn't as old? Or will the patient have to take out a loan to cover the costs of medical care if he or she doesn't have the resources?

What if the patient is to be admitted to a hospital for surgery but, too bad, the cabinet said that hospital's done too much of that same kind of surgery, too many of those operations? Can the patient have the operation if she pays for it? Well, then where is the commensurate right of the hospital to charge for that necessary surgery if that's the intention of the bill?

If hospitals and doctors and other practitioners must recoup their costs by charging patients for necessary medical care, what then is the place of medicare in Ontario? For it is clear this bill creates a two-tier system, where those who can pay for the care they need will receive it, and those who can't pay will have to take their lumps if the government deems that they have to take their lumps.

That is exactly what the federal-provincial medicare plan was designed precisely to avoid. Medicare's primary objective, as defined in the Canada Health Act, and I'm quoting directly from the act, is “to protect, promote and restore the physical and mental wellbeing of residents of Canada and to facilitate reasonable access to health services without financial or other barriers.”

There are five principles and criteria for a medicare program: public administration, comprehensiveness, universality, portability and accessibility. As we look at Bill 50 today, I want to draw your attention specifically to two of those criteria: universality and accessibility.

The Canada Health Act says in section 10: “In order to satisfy the criterion respecting universality, the health care insurance plan of a province must entitle one hundred per cent of the insured persons of the province to the ensured health services of the province provided for by the plan on uniform terms and conditions.”

It doesn't say that an insured service can be an insured service in one place on one day but not an insured service in another place on the same day. It doesn't say that an insured service isn't an insured service if the patient has received it before. It doesn't say that an insured service isn't an insured service if a quota has been met.

But Bill 50 means that the government can determine unilaterally, without notice or consultation, what medical services persons can receive, where they can receive them, how often they can receive them, from whom they can receive them. The Minister of Health and her officials could determine whether a person in Toronto can receive treatment when a person in Cornwall cannot, although it's more likely in fact to be the very opposite case. The Minister of Health, under this legislation, could say that a doctor in Windsor must practise in a different way than a doctor in Renfrew. The Minister of Health and her bureaucrats can say that a person cannot receive medical care, even if that care is medically necessary, because the patient has received treatment before.

With this bill, I believe the principle of universality of our medicare program is threatened. Once again I want to read back to you that particular and very important section which says, “In order to satisfy the criterion respecting universality, the health care insurance plan of a province must entitle one hundred per cent of the insured persons of the province to the

insured health services provided by the plan on uniform terms and conditions."

The universality criterion is under attack here, but the accessibility criterion is also under attack.

I would like to move to that section of the Canada Health Act, which is section 12, and read directly from that very important piece of Canadian law:

"12(1) In order to satisfy the criterion respecting accessibility, the health care insurance plan of a province

"(a) must provide for insured health services on uniform terms and conditions and on a basis that does not impede or preclude, either directly or indirectly whether by charges made to insured persons or otherwise, reasonable access to those services by insured persons;

"(b) must provide for payment for insured health services in accordance with a tariff or system of payment authorized by the law of the province;

"(c) must provide for reasonable compensation for all insured health services rendered by medical practitioners or dentists; and

"(d) must provide for the payment of amounts to hospitals, including hospitals owned or operated by Canada, in respect of the cost of insured health services."

"(2) In respect of any province in which extra billing is not permitted, paragraph (1)(c)"—that is with respect to the reasonable compensation for medical practitioners—"shall be deemed to be complied with if the province has chosen to enter into, and has entered into, an agreement with the medical practitioners and dentists of the province that provides

"(a) for negotiations relating to compensation for insured health services between the province and the provincial organizations that represent practicing medical practitioners or dentists in the province;

"(b) for the settlement of disputes relating to compensation through, at the option of the appropriate provincial organizations referred to in paragraph (a), conciliation or binding arbitration by a panel that is equally representative of the provincial organizations and the province and that has an independent chairman; and

"(c) that a decision of the panel referred to in paragraph (b) may not be altered except by an act of the legislature of the province."

That section, in non-legalese, says, first of all, that the insurance plan for health care in the province must be provided to all insured persons on uniform terms and conditions, and it says that in a province such as Ontario, where extra billing is not allowed, that the government must negotiate with the organization representing its physicians in terms of compensation for services which are rendered under the plan.

That is what the Canada Health Act requires, and indeed Ontario does have an agreement with the Ontario Medical Association. We heard all about it on May 6, 1991, and we have watched the progress of that framework and economic agreement with enormous interest since that time.

When it was announced on May 6, 1991, Health Minister Frances Lankin called it a "landmark agreement." I'd just like to read a couple of quotes from the speech she gave at the time the agreement was signed:

"This agreement brings to the system a new cooperative approach to management that will allow for the kind of health care planning that this province has always needed.

"Physicians have agreed to help the government achieve more value for health care spending in Ontario," she said. "They have agreed to help achieve the appropriate number, mix and distribution of physicians, based upon Ontario's needs.

"A joint management committee, with representatives from the OMA and from government, will work to enhance the quality and effectiveness of medical care, including the pursuit of more value for existing spending."

1550

That's what the government said in 1991, and those were the exact words of the then Minister of Health, the Honourable Frances Lankin. But today, Bill 50 will mean that the provisions of the Ontario Medical Association/province of Ontario framework and economic agreement are—I'm going to read some direct quotes from this act, because this is what the effect of this bill is. It says provisions of the agreement are "not enforceable." There is no obligation, if the government so designates, for the Minister of Health to "pay money in connection with the provision of health services and to engage in related negotiation, mediation or arbitration."

I remind you that the Canada Health Act requires that very negotiation, mediation or arbitration. It requires that physicians and practitioners be reasonably compensated and fairly compensated for the services they provide. This bill not only overrides the framework and economic agreement which the government has enacted with the Ontario Medical Association, but in those very circumstances overrides the Canada Health Act.

Bill 50 will allow the Minister of Health to decide that a physician can receive "a reduced amount or no amount" for treatment provided to patients. Furthermore, in case people missed this, the provisions are all retroactive to April 1, 1993. That means that the government can claw back payments that it has already made to physicians three months ago if it decides that the GP had treated too many patients for the same problem or because the GP didn't meet a regional quota that was also imposed retroactively.

Without negotiation or the clinical expertise that's so desperately needed, the Minister of Health can decide what is medically necessary or under what circumstances health care services are medically necessary.

Let's look at one, specifically, of the services which the government has arbitrarily decided is not medically necessary. The government has signalled its intent to prescribe the conditions for receiving service. The government's expenditure control plan singles out psychotherapy for particular treatment. I want to make it clear that whatever gobbledegook the Minister of Health puts before you, you should listen very carefully on this issue, because this was an idea that sprang out of somebody's head in the Ministry of Health. The proposal does not have and never has had the approval of the joint management committee or the Ontario Medical Association.

The Ministry of Health expenditure control plan for physicians' services explicitly states that the goal is to establish yearly per-patient maximums for psychotherapy. It says that Ontario spends more per capita on psychotherapy than any other province; that some patients see their physicians several hours a day every week and the medical benefits of such intensive therapy are questionable. The proposal is to restrict payments to 100 hours per year per patient, which equates to two hours per week per patient. This will result in 1993-94 savings of \$26.5 million. I believe, in another document, those savings are projected to a much higher amount, in the area of some \$40 million, but I will have that figure.

That is the target and that is the goal. The government has itself said that the value of intensive psychotherapy is questionable, but on June 16, I asked the minister—and you will know that in the House today I stood up on a point of order, through an order paper question, to ask the minister to provide any kind of and all documentation relating to the ministry's proposal to restrict patient access to psychotherapy services to two hours per week per patient, including—this was part of the information that I asked for—cost-benefit studies prepared, health outcomes analysis and studies undertaken, minutes of consultative meetings that were held, surveys that were conducted or any other activities which were undertaken by the Ministry of Health to formulate this proposal.

As you know, Mr Speaker, under the rules of the House, I was entitled to a response on or about June 26. Instead, I received a notice stating that the answer could not be provided until July 14. Well, July 14 came and went and I do not to this day have an answer. I don't believe there will be one, or, if there is one, it won't be a complete response, because the health outcomes analysis, in my view, was not done. I would assume that if the minister wants to refute that statement, she will do so in questions and comments subsequent to my discussion.

I do not believe, given the expert opinion which has come in to all members of this Legislature, that the health outcomes analysis of this proposal, which has been put forward by the Ministry of Health, was done; I do not believe that the consultative meetings were held, and I will have some more discussion on that particular question later on; nor do I believe that the patient surveys were conducted. This proposal is an off-the-top-of-the-head proposal, and there's nothing to back it up.

On June 7, the Ministry of Health issued a backgrounder. It made some statements that have been characterized by the Ontario branches of the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society as, and I quote this, "misleading and inaccurate." The society presented some information to clarify the facts, and I would like to read some of that information into the record. The ministry statement, which the society says is false, reads as follows:

"In intensive, long-term psychotherapy, a patient may attend therapy many hours a day, several days a week, indefinitely. The intensity of treatment is seen by many experts in the field of psychiatry to be of questionable medical benefit."

What is true, according to the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society, is:

"Psychoanalysis is a proven, effective treatment for serious mental illness. Psychoanalysis treats severe and chronic mental disorders that prevent individuals from functioning as productive parents, employees and citizens. For this small group of patients, it is a treatment of last resort. Psychoanalysis takes place for one hour each day, four or five times per week. It is an intensive therapy designed to break through painful emotional barriers and heal deep-seated traumas.

"Every leading psychiatric association across Ontario has enthusiastically supported the retention of psychoanalysis as a fully insured medical procedure, including: the five chairs of the departments of psychiatry at Ontario medical schools, the Ontario Medical Association section of psychiatry, the Ontario Psychiatric Association, the Ontario branches of the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society, other psychiatric organizations and citizens' groups.

"Based on the extensive documentation which supports the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of psychoanalysis, even the ministry's own joint management committee recommended in 1992 that psychoanalysis remain an insured service."

The ministry statement, the backgrounder, says:

"The new proposal would limit psychotherapy to 100 hours a patient per year. Seven other provinces have set similar limits on psychotherapy. More than 100 hours per year per patient is deemed excessive by these provinces."

Well, I found out what happens in other provinces,

and I'm going to move away from the psychoanalytic society's documentation and provide you with an analysis of what does occur in other provinces.

In Alberta, psychoanalysis is an insured service only if it is performed by a psychiatrist. There is no set limit on the number of hours a patient can receive psychoanalytic treatment.

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In Manitoba, psychoanalysis is an insured service if it is performed by a psychiatrist or if it is performed in a hospital by a psychologist. There is no set limit on the number of hours a patient can obtain psychoanalytic treatment.

In British Columbia, psychoanalysis is an insured service only if it is performed by a psychiatrist. Under the provincial medical insurance plan, there is no set limit on the number of hours a patient can obtain psychoanalytic treatment. According to Keith Sigmundson, the director of mental health services, British Columbia has a shortage of psychoanalytic services. In fact, this province has approximately five or six psychoanalytic centres.

In New Brunswick, psychoanalysis is an insured service only if it is performed by a psychiatrist. Under the provincial medical insurance plan, patients are allowed to visit a psychiatrist only once a day. If they exceed this limit, the medical insurance will not cover their expenses. If the patient visits a psychiatrist once a day, the patient can receive psychoanalytic treatment for as long as he or she desires without incurring any costs.

In Newfoundland, psychoanalysis is an insured service only if it is performed by a psychiatrist or a general practitioner. However, there is no limit on the number of hours a patient can receive psychoanalytic treatment.

In Nova Scotia, psychoanalysis is an insured service only if it is performed by a psychiatrist. There is no maximum number of hours that will be insured. The psychiatrist has full discretion to carry on sessions for as long as he or she feels they are medically necessary.

In Prince Edward Island, psychoanalysis is insured. The provincial medical insurance plan will only pay for an individual to undergo treatment for a maximum of six months. During this six-month period, the patient can receive daily treatment so long as this treatment does not exceed a certain number of hours. If a patient's treatment exceeds six months, a medical adviser will assess the case in order to determine if insurance should continue to pay for this service.

In Quebec, psychoanalysis is generally not insured unless it is rendered in a hospital that has been authorized by the Minister of Health. There is no set limit on the number of hours a patient can receive psychoanalytic treatment.

In Saskatchewan, psychoanalysis is an insured

service. There is no maximum number of hours after which the insurance company will refuse to pay for a person's treatment.

Those are the facts.

As I move back to the society's analysis of the government's statements with respect to this particular issue, I want to move to its next point. I think that one stands alone and I hope that the minister will look at the kind of analysis that was prepared by her ministry officials and the kind of review that they made.

The backgrounder from the Ministry of Health says, "The patients not requiring hospitalization would rarely exceed the arbitrary limit," which the Minister of Health will be requiring under this new quota.

The society says: "Psychoanalysis saves the health care system direct costs by keeping patients out of psychiatric hospitals and in our communities as contributing members of society. Patients left untreated make serious demands on our health system in the form of increased medical utilization. Many end up on an endless 'merry-go-round' of ineffective treatments and suffer prolonged pain. A comparison study in Australia and New Zealand shows that unlimited psychotherapy benefits in Australia led to less overall mental health care expenditures. Germany reinstated psychoanalysis when research showed its absence was costing the health system more in hospitalizations and increased medical utilization."

The statement in the Ministry of Health backgrounder says, "Long-term, ongoing support services are available through community mental health services or self-help groups."

The society has this to say: "82% of patients currently in psychoanalysis have already tried briefer forms of treatment including self-help groups, and have not been successful in finding a satisfactory resolution of their illness. They have turned to psychoanalysis as the only workable solution to heal their wounds in a long-term permanent way."

The backgrounder then goes on to say, and this was the figure I was looking for, that the savings of the arbitrary yearly quotas on psychotherapy treatments for patients are estimated at \$42.4 million annualized. The society points out that the government has never provided a clear, well-documented answer to the question of what, if any, savings will be realized by limiting psychotherapy. All of the numbers, the society says, which have been floated out as possible savings appear to be grossly inflated and completely out of proportion to the current level of psychoanalysis that is being practised.

I bring those issues to your attention because, of course, psychotherapy is one of the areas in the expenditure control plan that serves as the perfect example of the powers that the Minister of Health and the govern-

ment, through cabinet, will have in determining what services should be provided, when they should be provided, how they should be provided and to whom they should be provided.

Although I am not an expert in this area, certainly experts have come to me with information, and we have been able to gather documentation on our own. The information we have that's been placed before us, through these interventions and through materials we have gathered, indicates that the homework has not been done here, that the background material which led the Ministry of Health to this kind of unilateral proposal is in fact not appropriate and does not benefit from the expertise and the guidance of those who work in the field, of those who do the analysis with respect to utilization, of those who are making the extensive analysis and study of what in fact is appropriate and needed in our medical care system.

For the government to march unilaterally ahead in the face of such overwhelming expert evidence, it seems to me, is problematic in this area. However, if the government can march unilaterally ahead in other areas, God help the people of Ontario.

I also want to read into the record, with respect to this issue, a portion of a letter which has been sent by Dr Norman Doidge, who is head of the assessment clinic at the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry. His letter was written to the Premier. I did, you may know, read part of this letter into the record of the estimates committee the other day because clearly I'm concerned about the arbitrary nature of this decision.

He writes to Premier Rae:

"I wish to respond to a recent Ministry of Health backgrounder dated June 7, 1993, entitled 'Proposed Limits on Psychotherapy.'

That backgrounder announces the government policy to limit the number of psychotherapy sessions per patient.

"It makes no more sense to legislate the number of psychotherapy sessions for all patients in the province than it does to legislate the dose of chemotherapy that every woman with breast cancer will receive or to mandate that every bridge in Ontario will be 250 feet long. This proposal seeks to fit all patients into the same mould and disparages and discards those who will not fit. When such a policy is based on inaccurate statements about psychotherapy, such statements must not go uncorrected."

Dr Doidge does an analysis of the Ministry of Health backgrounder in this area. He then goes on to say:

"Clearly, two groups are targeted by this decision. The first group is psychoanalytic patients, 82% of whom have tried briefer treatments without symptom resolution. These patients amount to only 4% of OHIP psychotherapy billings and less than 0.1% of the

Ministry of Health budget. I have recently done a study on these patients in depth and they have frequently suffered childhood traumas (22% of them have had parents or siblings die in childhood, an equal number have been physically or sexually abused) and these patients have legitimate psychiatric diagnoses.

"The second targeted group are those with severe personality disorders or traumatic histories, many of whom require three-times-a-week treatment. The fifth bullet [in the backgrounder] states inaccurately that such patients 'may require two hours or twice-weekly sessions.' Sometimes this is the case, but as a generalization this is unsound and numerous checks on the subject of patients with personality disorders state that three and sometimes four times a week are necessary for these patients."

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I was quite taken with one particular paragraph in Dr Doidge's letter. He says:

"It is thoroughly legitimate for politicians and bureaucrats in the ministry to request that we document how we make our decisions. However, it is not legitimate for bureaucrats and politicians to make decisions on the patient's behalf. It is especially alarming when such decisions go against the advice of the most senior psychiatrists in the province, or world experts on the indications for psychotherapy and psychoanalysis."

I want to underline again the poignant case Dr Doidge has made. First, the government's conclusion that psychoanalysis and intensive psychotherapy is of questionable medical benefit is inaccurate, misleading and in contradiction of what the experts have stated or what is stated in the major psychiatric texts. Second, it is legitimate for politicians and bureaucrats to request that practitioners document how decisions are made, but it is not legitimate for bureaucrats and politicians to make decisions on the patient's behalf. Third, patients themselves have been made to suffer pain as a result of the government's threats to delist this treatment, then saying it would not be delisted, then again saying the treatment would no longer be insured.

I found it enormously puzzling, as the expenditure cut document was placed on the table earlier this year, to see that the limitations on psychotherapy were once again back on the table, because on January 29, 1993, Frances Lankin took this issue off the table. She said:

"A number of items that are not insured by some other provinces, including psychoanalysis, have been reviewed by a subcommittee of the JMC. This subcommittee has recommended to me that psychoanalysis be maintained within the fee schedule and that separate fee codes be developed to allow the ministry to more closely monitor the efficacy of and access to psychoanalytic services."

The recommendation to the minister and the action

the minister indicated that she was taking at the time were conveyed to many patients across the province. In fact, the information that was conveyed allowed patients to believe that psychoanalysis and the removal of services were no longer on the table. None the less, when the expenditure control plan came down, we see that it's there again.

If the government is convinced that a disproportionate share of our medicare dollar is being directed at psychotherapy, then it should be prepared to explore ways, with the profession, that will ensure that those who need care are not cut off from care and do not receive an inappropriate form of care and that the care is provided by those with the skills and training to do so. Dr Doidge correctly points out that the government's proposal restricts the practice of psychotherapy by those who are most trained to do it on an equal basis to those who do not have extensive training.

Surely that is an avenue to explore with the profession, but as long as the government takes arbitrary problems and arbitrary solutions, it will not find the savings it wants, because costs will be transferred elsewhere into the system, and worst of all, patients will suffer.

The entire question of delisting some medical services or the decision not to add others is central to Bill 50. I've used psychotherapy as an example, and I could have used others. The issue is the basis on which services are delisted and to which people will have no access under medicare or what new services are added to medicare coverage and what expertise is involved in making those decisions. They are not for the Minister of Health alone and they are not for the Premier alone and they are not for the cabinet alone.

People feel much more comfortable knowing that excesses are taken out of the system, but they want to know that there is a medical and clinical rationale for determining what should be at the basis of our health care system. If medical expertise, combined with political will, judges that the removal of tattoos should not be covered by health insurance, then, with appropriate public information and notice, there will be an acceptance of that decision. If medical expertise, combined with political will, judges that the reversal of sterilization should not be covered by health insurance, then again, with appropriate public information and notice, there will be an acceptance of that decision.

But this bill provides so much one-sided power, and that side is where the expertise as to medical necessity does not rest. It is a serious onslaught on every person who needs medical care.

Now, let me give you what I know the minister will characterize as a wild example. With this bill the Minister of Health can indeed determine what is medically necessary. That has not been left out of the bill, has not been precluded from the bill. While the minister

will say, "This is a wild proposal," just say that if the minister doesn't happen to like Caesarean sections, Caesarean sections could be taken out of OHIP coverage. If the minister doesn't think that certain kinds of addiction treatment work, those certain kinds of addiction treatment could be taken out of OHIP coverage. While those examples may be extreme, that is the kind of power that is transferred to the Minister of Health and the government with this bill.

I think we should look at those ramifications of this legislation. While the current minister may not act in that kind of rash way, who knows what another minister could do with the kind of power that ministry officials have themselves described as a blunt instrument?

I think we should look at some of the other practical ramifications of the legislation and we should understand that there are many implications to this bill. The Ontario Hospital Association has pointed some of them out in its letter to the Minister of Health which was written on July 6, and I would like to read that letter into the record. It says:

"The Ontario Hospital Association has now had the opportunity to review in detail Bill 50, the Expenditure Control Plan Statute Law Amendment Act, and I am writing today to convey the views of the association on this legislation.

"Although the major impact of the legislation will be on physicians and other professionals, it is clear that it will also extend into hospital diagnostic and therapeutic services that are directly paid by OHIP.

"The proposed legislation is designed to give to the government extraordinary power to determine the type of services to be provided and the circumstances under which these services will or will not be paid for. On top of this, the amount of the payment, if any, may also be determined by order in council, as well as the type of physician or facility that will be paid.

"We are not aware of any provincial legislation that gives to cabinet this type of all-inclusive power without the necessity for consultation. This is in stark contrast to the government's approach to social contract negotiations in Bill 48, the Social Contract Act, where the approach is unquestionably being linked to open consultation and consideration of the interests of all parties.

"The powers defined in the legislation go far beyond what is necessary to satisfy the stated objects of the act, to the extent that one could conclude that the government may have abandoned all intentions of joint management of the system by the parties.

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"The Ontario Hospital Association is of the opinion that this is an unacceptable precedent to be set in a health care system without major public debate. What is reported to be a device to manage a fiscal issue is now seen to be a statute to give management authority to the

cabinet for all aspects of the operation of the medical care system. The management authority given to the government greatly exceeds the management rights provided for under any labour relations model.

"While the Ontario Hospital Association respects the right of the government to control its fiscal position and supports the effort to improve physician distribution in the province, there are many other ways in which these objects can be achieved without resorting to executive control of the detailed management of health care. Nor is the association convinced that this is what the government is seeking, as this is an entirely new intervention that hospitals and others affected cannot support.

"The Ontario Hospital Association urges you to reconsider the intent and the scope of the bill and either to withdraw it or to focus it more closely on the stated objects. At the very least, the bill should be subject to open public discussion, including committee hearings, prior to the conclusion of the legislative process."

I understand that indeed there will be committee hearings with respect to this bill as it moves along the legislative schedule, but I can tell you that the Ontario Hospital Association response will be mild compared to what most of the intervenors will say when those hearings begin.

The Ontario Hospital Association talks about executive control of the detailed management of health care and deplores the government's approach. It recommends, as I say, that the government either withdraw the bill or change its scope substantially. The OHA, like Layne Verbeek from the ministry, doesn't believe that the government has contemplated using such a blunt instrument. If not, once again, why do we have this dangerous bill? Is it to control physician resources? If so, it's not needed.

Let me go back to the government's own paper, presented as a supplement to the 1992 provincial budget, entitled Managing Health Care Resources. That paper was a signal of change that the government intended to see driven into the system, but in no way could it be seen as a precursor to this particular piece of legislation.

If I may, I'd like to quote from the section of the document relating to physician resource management, which is a fancy way of saying "making sure that we have the right number of doctors in the right places providing the right treatment at the right time to the right people."

Now this is going to be fairly lengthy, but I want it to be understood that the approach that was presented in this Managing Health Care Resources statement was one indeed that the government had been pursuing with the OMA through the joint management committee, and some progress had been made in the whole area. In fact, the approach that was put forward in this document was

one that linked the physician resources problems in Ontario to those that were being faced throughout the country.

"The issue of physician resource management is important not only for Ontario but for every province. All ministers of health in Canada see this issue as key to strengthening the health care system and preserving the principles of the Canada Health Act.

"In January 1992, the Provincial/Territorial Conference of Ministers of Health held in Banff adopted a series of strategic directions for physician human resource management. At this meeting, representatives from six national medical organizations provided a consensus statement that recognized the need for a nationally coordinated physician resource strategy.

"The strategic directions adopted by the Provincial/Territorial Conference of Ministers of Health included:

"—Reducing the number of doctors trained by Canadian medical schools.

"—Establishing national clinical guidelines.

"—Making medical care expenditures more predictable.

"—Replacing fee for service with other methods of payment.

"—Increasing the use of alternative service delivery models.

"—Restructuring academic medical centres to meet the health care needs of the population.

"—Improving access to clinical services in rural communities.

"—Ensuring continuing competency of physicians.

"—Promoting flexibility between professional groups."

That was the national approach. From that, the Ontario Ministry of Health moved into looking at what should be Ontario's approach to managing physician resources. The document goes on to say:

"The Ontario Ministry of Health recognizes the need to develop a physician human resources strategy that complements national directions. As an initial step, the Ontario and federal governments will co-host a national conference on physician issues in Ottawa in June [1992]. The conference will provide a discussion forum for federal, provincial and territorial governments, and various stakeholder groups."

This was the promise: "In consultation with stakeholders, the government will also develop a comprehensive physician management strategy to better manage the number, mix and distribution of physicians in Ontario. This strategy will be linked to the national plan and based on the documented health and cultural/linguistic needs of the population. The government will work towards:

“—Better aligning the educational supply of physicians to the health care needs of the province.

“—Modifying the medical education experience to better prepare physicians for the settings in which they will eventually practise.

“—Exploring ways to better distribute physician human resources geographically and by health care setting.

“—Creating a system of linked, regional, multi-disciplinary referral networks to effect a mix and distribution of physicians that provides a more rational means of accessing health care providers.”

Along with what was an apparently rational initial first step, coordinated with steps that were being taken on a national level, the government clearly made a commitment to proceed in consultation with stakeholders.

I have to ask if the government follows its own strategy. Does it work within the national parameters? No. Does it work in consultation with the stakeholders? No. The first announcement that we saw of any initiatives in this particular area of physician resource strategy was that all new graduating residents and interns will be penalized as they begin their working life; that they will only be paid a quarter of their legitimate fee unless they set up practice precisely where and under the precise conditions that the Minister of Health determines.

That is the physician resource strategy that is referenced in the expenditure control plan, and it's one that stands alone. It is not within the boundaries of all the other initiatives in the physician resources strategy, that I think we all agree are important.

Let me give you an example of this particular policy on a new, young paediatrician with whom I spoke. She had 10 years of specialized training beyond high school. She didn't come from a wealthy family and she had a load of school debts. She wanted to work with the cancer kids and she had made arrangements to buy, over time, a practice from a physician who had specialized in this area and who would gradually ease out of the practice as she took over.

In her first year, under normal circumstances, because of the way that she was easing into the practice, she expected to bill OHIP about \$60,000 for her services and she anticipated that her costs would be approximately \$30,000. So she would be left with an income of \$30,000 to \$32,000. That was her best guess.

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But one day she caught the Minister of Health's musings and learned that while she might bill OHIP \$60,000, she would be paid only \$15,000. Her costs would still be close to \$30,000, so in her first year of practice, she would lose \$15,000, and this would go on for another four years. So, modestly, at the end of the five-year period that the Minister of Health has disig-

nated, this highly trained young woman would have incurred a government-imposed debt of \$75,000 plus all the costs of carrying that debt. Effectively, she was locked out of practice and her potential patients were deprived of her care.

The numbers and the circumstances change, and that may well be an extreme example, but I suspect that it's not an extreme example according to what I've heard from other residents and interns. None the less, the point is still the same. What kind of strategy was this except the way I've characterized it, as a stupid one? Was there any sense to it? Was there any kind of logic? Did it fit in any way into a physician resources plan that was thoughtful and workable? Did it mesh in any way with the national approach? Did it serve patients any better? Did any person benefit in any way? The answer is no on every one of those counts.

In my view, that announcement was a stupid, panic-driven, slash-and-burn policy. When the howls began, did the minister withdraw it? No, she left it on the table.

Then a new committee was formed, and we heard the minister speak about it in her introductory remarks today, with Dr John Evans at the head, and people from medical schools were part of that committee. They understood that the issue of physician resources planning was not one for which an immediate solution could be found. But in lickety-split time, they did come up with the first phase of another proposal, which included, among other things, paying new doctors 75% of the legitimate fee schedule unless they practised in designated regions or a specialized area.

Well, we know what happened to that. The minister said that she liked it. She told the media that she liked that plan and she'd take it to cabinet. But there's many a slip 'twixt cup and lip, and in the current OMA negotiations, guess what? There are two proposals on the table.

The minister has never clarified to the public, to the residents and interns, to this House, to the affected new doctors, to the existing profession precisely what her position is. Is it a 25% discount or is it a 75% discount? What other requirements are to be added for new doctors or for those who are about to retire? Those issues are clearly now being negotiated with the Ontario Medical Association.

But if the minister isn't happy with what comes out of the negotiations, I point out to you that under Bill 50 she can simply change it and choose her own additional requirements. She can say that night and evening practices are restricted by the compensation plan she elects, not only for new doctors but for all doctors. She can ensure that emergency departments will not be staffed in many hospitals in Ontario as a result of steps that she takes. That already is happening, and I'm going to refer to that shortly. Under Bill 50, all of those things are quite permissible and in fact, according to the

government, desirable. If it's not desirable, then why do we have Bill 50?

Let me go back to some of the issues that were included in the national approach and some of the steps that Ontario indicated it was going to take as it looked at physician resources.

First of all, better aligning the educational supply of physicians to the health care needs of the province: One of the things that Ontario lacks, in my view, is a health status report. We don't know now precisely what the health status of our population is.

I recall when Marc Lalonde was Minister of National Health and Welfare that one of the major steps that was undertaken as the nation launched its review at that point in time of national medicare, it was important that the status review of the population be undertaken. It brought forward some startling facts, and I urge that you look at that report and see what it contains.

But in fact, as we're planning physician resources, we don't know what the health status of the population is. None the less, the government has adopted some ratios which were put in place several years ago and is using those as a guideline and, finally, we now have agreement of the medical schools that there is a decline in those who will be accepted in certain specialties and in medical school as a whole.

Modifying the medical education experience to better prepare physicians for the settings in which they will eventually practice, this proposal has started. In northern Ontario, there are young medical students who are attending school at Laurentian University in both Thunder Bay and in Sudbury, and indeed many of those young people were quite willing on their graduation to practise in the north. In those instances, they are general practitioners and they are having a very full view of what it means to practise in the north while they are receiving their training as well.

None the less, under the minister's proposals, they could well also have been shut out from the practice of medicine, with no notice and with no indication of any kind of a rational approach to ensuring that communities have adequate coverage.

We know that many hospitals are already pressed for physician staffing, on nights, on weekends, in their emergency departments, and I could you tell you many communities that have very serious problems. Geraldton is one; Barry's Bay—I think the member for Renfrew has raised the issue of that hospital in this House; Mount Forest in Grey county; Tweed. All have a difficult time and many face times when there is no physician available at the hospital.

The impact of the unilateral decision-making that this bill will allow that can sweep aside any negotiated settlements, any negotiated agreements with the Ontario Medical Association to impose a practice pattern, to

impose a fee, is highly problematic, because if you look at some of the issues that are included in the expenditure control plan, you see that it's not just a tiny range of items that are affected.

After-hours premiums for services which are paid to physicians on off-hours: The government proposes to eliminate the emergency department equivalent premium; it proposes to eliminate the evening and after-hours special visit premium; it proposes to extend the daytime premiums from 7 to 11 o'clock, and the night premiums would be extended from 11 o'clock till 7 in the morning.

The after-hours evening premium for surgical procedures will be reduced by 10%, including for surgical assistance and for anaesthetists; the evening special visit premium for surgical assistance and anaesthetists would be eliminated; and the after-midnight premium and special trips wouldn't be changed.

The ministry calculates that those initiatives together would save \$26 million in this year and something like \$40-plus million on a full-year basis. But the impact cannot be limited to examining how much money will be saved. The impact must also be examined in terms of what services will no longer be available to people in their own communities.

I guarantee you that if that analysis hasn't been done, if this change is implemented on a unilateral basis, as the minister will now have the power to do, there will be severe repercussions in many communities where there already are problems and this kind of initiative will certainly exacerbate those problems.

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On two occasions recently in the House we've seen very unusual interventions from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario in consideration of the consent to treatment, advocacy and substitute decision bills, because the government had there acted in a unilateral and ill-informed way. The college felt that it had to intervene and become involved in the debate on those bills to ensure that changes were made that will enable the law to be workable and to ensure that physicians would not be subject to disciplinary matters for making a choice between delivering care to their patients and following a law which was badly crafted and badly thought out.

The college, as you know, has been, I think, quite forward-looking in making its recommendations with respect to sexual abuse by practitioners of their patients known to the ministry and to have those recommendations come for evaluation. We know that the bill the ministry introduced was not what will be a workable document, but we are anticipating, and the Minister of Health has promised, that there will be substantial amendments to that bill. But as I say, it is unusual for the College of Physicians and Surgeons to intervene and to become involved and embroiled in a debate with

respect to particular legislation. However, once again, because of the draconian nature of this legislation, the college has found it necessary to become involved in the particular debate with respect to Bill 50.

I have received a letter from them which reads as follows, dated July 26, 1993:

"Dear Mrs Sullivan:

"The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario hopes that the introduction for second reading of Bill 50 will give members of the Legislature the opportunity to reflect on some of the fundamental changes to Ontario's health care system that could result from the passage of this bill.

"While the government has an obligation to control costs, it cannot, even with the best information and intentions, practise medicine by setting out in regulation what the limits of particular services should be under different clinical circumstances. Yet this is the apparent effect of one of the suggested amendments to the Health Insurance Act contained in Bill 50.

"This amendment interposes the government both between the patient and the health care provider and between the patient and the actual place he or she may receive a particular medical service. It also opens the door to a two-tier, US-style health care system by introducing the notion that the patient must pay in certain circumstances for services which have previously been considered medically necessary and have thus been fully insured.

"Deeming certain kinds of services, or a specific number of occasions of a particular service, to be uninsured will simply transfer the costs to either the patient or a third party. As in the United States, this will inevitably lead to third parties, ie, insurance companies, deciding and defining the medical needs of the patient.

"A more sensible and sensitive alternative would be to allow the providers to work together with patients to provide necessary medical services within a predetermined global budget.

"As it stands, Bill 50 provides for limits to be imposed by regulation on a patient's legitimate need for essential medical services and on a provider's moral duty to render those services. It precludes professional judgement and denies legitimate essential services to those who need to receive more than the arbitrarily imposed number of said services. For example, taking only the area of cancer care, it raises questions such as:

"Who should determine how many treatments and of what kind could be rendered by a particular doctor in a particular institution to a particular patient? What would happen to that doctor or institution if the approved number of treatments were exceeded? What would happen to the patient if he or she reached the government-prescribed limit and was either refused further treatment or could not afford to buy the services

required above the government limits?

"Cost controls are a fact of life. The issue, however, is where to put the controls so that essential medical and health care judgements are made by the most informed and responsible people within the financial limits defined.

"Health care decisions are individual decisions. Individuals have different health care needs and professionals must have the flexibility to exercise their professional judgement in the best interests of their patients. If costs are to be controlled in a humane manner, those controls must be based on front-line, clinical judgements, not based on government decree.

"Yours truly, Michael E. Dixon, MD, MSc, FRCPC, Registrar of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario."

That letter is a poignant one and it speaks for itself.

My view is that the current Health Insurance Act provides the government of Ontario with all the power it needs to make appropriate decisions about the shape of our health insurance system and provides the scope for ensuring that the services that people require are considered and are, through the system, provided.

Let me just acquaint you with section 45 of the Health Insurance Act, through which the Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations with respect to the delivery of health services through the health insurance plan in Ontario.

The cabinet, by order in council, may make regulations "prescribing the services rendered in or by hospitals and health facilities and by practitioners that are insured services." The cabinet may make regulations "prescribing constituent elements that are a part of insured services rendered by physicians or by practitioners." The cabinet may make regulations "prescribing constituent elements that shall be deemed not to be part of insured services rendered by physicians or by practitioners."

The cabinet may make regulations "prescribing the amounts payable by the plan for insured services rendered in or outside of Ontario...by hospitals and health facilities and by physicians and practitioners and the conditions for their performance and for payment, but no schedule of payment shall be prescribed under this clause that would disqualify the province of Ontario, under the Canada Health Act, for contribution by the government of Canada because the plan would no longer satisfy the criteria under that Act."

The cabinet may make regulations "prescribing services that shall be deemed not to be insured services for the purposes of this act and the conditions under which the costs of any class of insured services are payable and limiting the payment commensurate with the circumstances of the performance of the services."

The cabinet may make regulations "prescribing

services that, despite any provision of this act, shall be deemed not to be insured services in respect of prescribed age groups of insured persons, or to be insured services only in respect of prescribed age groups of insured persons, but no service or age group shall be prescribed under this clause that would disqualify the province of Ontario, under the Canada Health Act, for contribution by the government of Canada because the plan would no longer satisfy the criteria under that act."

Mr Speaker, I point out to you that power is an extensive power. It has worked well in the past and, frankly, I think I've said on several occasions in committee and in this House that I was happily surprised to see that the framework agreement with the Ontario Medical Association in fact did bear some fruit. Unfortunately, I believe that framework agreement is jeopardized by this bill.

1650

The minister spoke about Bill 50 as being a fail-safe mechanism. I believe that this fail-safe mechanism is a gun to the head of the OMA. The minister is saying with Bill 50, "Do what we want in whatever area we want, whether it's the delisting of medical services, whether it is in the planning of physician resource supply, whether it is saying what medical treatments can be provided in what facilities at what time, whether it's with respect to compensation for various kinds of services that are provided." The government is saying, "We'll see what kind of agreement we come to at the negotiating table, but if we don't like it, we will use Bill 50 to throw that agreement out and we will impose what we wanted in the first place."

The minister calls Bill 50 a tool. She doesn't need this tool. The Ontario Health Insurance Act and the Canada Health Act provide all the tools that are required and necessary for the delivery of a competent and complete medicare system in Canada.

I know I have 10 minutes left; I know my colleagues want to participate in this bill. I can't tell you how strongly I feel that this bill is an outrage. It should be withdrawn. There is no need for it. If the government doesn't intend to use it, as a ministry spokesman has indicated, then it shouldn't be on the table.

As the hospital association, the medical association, the college of physicians and surgeons and individual consumers have indicated, this bill goes far beyond what's necessary. It's the wrong bill, it's at the wrong time, and I guarantee that when we go out on the road with this bill in committee, there will be outrage expressed by anyone who has a need for medical care and who wants to know that the determination of the necessity and the clinical value of the medical care that's being provided is being determined by someone with the expertise to make those recommendations and to come up with those policies, and not solely in the back room of the NDP government at Queen's Park.

I think that on no other matter so much as medicare are people's lives entwined with the emotional issues. As Canadians, we define ourselves by the pride we have in our health care system and the fact that we care for other people who are perhaps in a less healthy state and there is no threat to their financial stability as a result of being sick. We have a system where you don't have to be rich to be cared for and to receive medical treatment.

This bill, in my view, goes a long way in throwing that out the window, and along with it the entire principle of medicare in the province of Ontario. My party will fight this bill every step of the way. We will not be supporting it; I think that's clear. We think it's a dangerous precedent, one that cannot be tolerated. As I conclude my remarks, it will be with one plea: that the Minister of Health withdraw Bill 50.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for her participation in the debate. Questions and/or comments? If there are none, further debate?

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I appreciate the opportunity to speak for the next hour and to continue my remarks tomorrow with respect to Bill 50. The title of the bill is An Act to implement the Government's expenditure control plan and, in that connection, to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act.

I want to say to all members of the House and to the public that this is one of the most very serious pieces of legislation this House could possibly debate during the mandate of an NDP government, and it is one of the most ironic pieces of legislation. I recall well that in the last election campaign and for many, many years—in fact, decades—prior to the 1990 election, the NDP told the people of Ontario that it had a corner on compassion, that only it understood the needs of the people of this province. When I went to doors in the last election, people were telling me that Bob Rae understood their concerns, that the Tories didn't understand their concerns, that the Liberals had spent too much and still not provided the services that were needed for the people of this province.

Bill 50, this bill, allows the government to take unto itself unprecedented powers. If I were the Tory Minister of Health, if we had won the last election and I were the Conservative Minister of Health for this province, if I or any of my colleagues in the Ontario PC Party or in fact the Liberal Party tried to bring in legislation that's this draconian, the NDP would be hanging from those chandeliers. They would absolutely want all of our heads on a serving plate. They would be screaming. There would be headlines in the Toronto Star, in the Globe and Mail and the local papers throughout the province. Bob Rae would be on his sanctimonious horse telling us what a bunch of idiots we are that we don't understand the people of this province, that we're ending medicare as we know it in this province. I tell

you, it's ironic, it's sad and it's shameful that the NDP is doing exactly that.

I heard no mention of the fact that they were going to pretend to be the physicians of this province in the last election. Dr Ruth has decided to be just that: Dr Ruth. She, along with Bob Rae and all of the NDP caucus, who sit there like a bunch of bumpkins, are going to tell the physicians and health care professionals in this province how to do their jobs. Let alone that they can't run a government, let alone the fact that they're the worst bunch of managers this province has ever seen, now they're going to meddle head first into the health care system. They're going to tell every physician exactly what services can be rendered, what services will be paid for and how often those services will be available to the people of this province.

The fundamental question here is, do you trust Bob Rae, do you trust Dr Ruth Grier, to run your health care system, when we know that, on every other issue they've tried to deal with in this province, they've absolutely, totally messed it up? They're the worst bunch of managers you could possibly elect to this chamber. It's unfortunate for the people of the province that, the way the cards fell in the last election, we end up with this government which is bringing in absolutely draconian measures.

The minister in her remarks this afternoon said, "This is fail-safe legislation." She tells the members of her caucus, "Like Bill 48, the social contract, we won't implement this legislation, but we want the power to tell every physician how to treat and communicate with his patients and how often." As I say, the NDP would be hanging from the chandeliers if we ever attempted to do something like this.

What I also found ironic in the minister's own remarks this afternoon is her saying, "Well, we may not ever use these wide-sweeping powers we're taking unto ourselves, the ability to make decisions behind closed cabinet doors, the ability to bypass any negotiation process with the union, the Ontario Medical Association."

The Treasurer a couple of weeks ago finally said what we've been saying since 1991, when the OMA and the government signed an agreement: that the OMA and the physicians in this province now do belong to a union. The party that sits across from us in the Legislature here, the New Democratic Party, claimed to be friends of unions. We've seen them totally mess that up in social contract discussions. Now with Bill 50, they want to go even further and bypass any discussions, which they're mandated to have under their agreement with the OMA. They take authority unto themselves to bypass those discussions on Bill 50, to totally ignore the OMA-government memorandum of understanding, the union agreement. In fact, in section 1 of the bill, they have the audacity to exempt themselves from any legal

action that may stem from their gutting of the OMA-government agreement.

They're going to go ahead and just ignore all the good things the OMA and other people in the health care system have helped to bring about in the last couple of years. The government admits that the medical profession in this province over the last couple of years has probably saved the government upwards of \$2 billion in savings. They've done that through a system of negotiations, through the joint management committee, through this memorandum of understanding, through lengthy and legalistic processes that are set out therein. They've done that, and now this government says, "That's not enough. We've got an expenditure control plan that was introduced in April and we've got a social contract. We need another \$1.6 billion out of health care. We can't wait for full public discussion. We don't want to talk to the public," and frankly the public probably doesn't want to talk to the NDP. I saw the poll today; they're at 16%. They're about as popular as Brian Mulroney was in his most unpopular days in office. That's ironic.

1700

But to bypass their union friends in the OMA I think is shameful. I don't know how any of these NDPers can go back to their ridings and talk to physicians. That's if they do talk to physicians. To hit on the medical profession, the medical services, is to hit on the people of this province. It's to hit on exactly what we used to pride ourselves in in Ontario, and that is that we were different from Americans, that we were different from other nations, because we had a medicare system which, regardless of your income, regardless of your ability to pay, you had access to that system. It was a system that had quality, it had universal accessibility and it was there when people needed it.

For 42 years, under my party's rule in this province, the polling showed that Ontarians consistently didn't worry all that much about their medicare system, because they trusted that there were managers in office who wouldn't bring in Bill 50s, who wouldn't bring in draconian legislation, who wouldn't take powers unto themselves to manage a health care system.

We know they'll make a complete mess of it. They already have. And what are we seeing? What have we seen since the NDP came in? We've seen the NDP try and convince the public that the only issue in this province is user fees. Well, let's dispel that myth for a while.

This government, several times announcing, and the Liberal government before it, had committed to \$647 million of new money into long-term care over the next four or five years. What the government and the Liberals before it didn't make clear is that \$150 million of that will come out of the pockets of seniors and residents of long-term care facilities in new user fees.

I don't want to hear that debate any more in this House. I think it's dishonest to go around saying there aren't user fees in the system, and I think it's dishonest to try and direct public debate to only a user-fee issue. What Bill 50 does is not only end medicare as we know it but gives the future management of medicare into the hands of the NDP government, and frankly I don't trust the NDP to do a good job. They've not done a good job on anything else they've ever tried to do, and I don't think the people of this province trust the NDP government to do a good job.

I want to read a couple of letters from the people of this province. The first one is an editorial, a comment by Mr Bruce Haire, which appeared in the June 30, 1993, edition of the *Record Sentinel* and the *Times*, which we know locally as the *Beeton-Tottenham-New Tecumseth papers*, published out of Beeton.

The headline is "Government by Indecision." It says:

"The Bob Rae horror story goes on and on and on. One week the big news story is panic in one sector of the public service. The next week it is of panic in another sector.

"This week it is the medical health care sector that is grabbing our headlines.

"We have an aging population—one which will be in need of additional health care.

"Studies done by local hospitals have determined the obvious—the area is growing and the population is aging—more hospital beds will be needed.

"Indeed, the province had approved the concept of hospital expansion and even the funding involved.

"Suddenly, Ministry of Health officials were showing up at meetings announcing: to heck with the studies, the province had changed its mind and wanted more bed closings, perhaps even hospital closings.

"Our worst Environment minister ever (you remember Ruth Grier—queen of the megadumps) is now making a name for herself as our worst Health minister ever. She is criss-crossing the province announcing hospital closings—10 in Toronto, one or two in Windsor....

"These are based on nothing but panic. The NDP give us over two years of denying recession and big spending and then panic in their pursuit of cutting soaring deficits.

"What is happening is almost beyond belief but the people of Ontario are coming to believe almost anything from Bob Rae, Ruth Grier and the crew of clowns.

"Here are the thoughts of Stevenson Memorial Hospital chief of staff Dr N.D. Gripper:

"Within the hospital building program we have seen constant changes of government personnel with whom we work. In the last few days our whole building program has been revamped with new ground rules and requirements. Even the funding has been changed.

"This type of uncertainty and lack of decision by government administrators in the health system creates a lack of faith in their decisions and ability for us to pursue a reliable and fulfillable agenda. From my observations in the past few weeks, they have thoroughly undermined the morale of those of us who have been struggling to function within this mess.

"We are further concerned that the actual patient care is of secondary importance. What seems to be important is the bureaucracy. While there are further major economies and closures going on within the hospital system, the much publicized improvements in the home care and the long-term care programs are not yet in place but from what I understand the Ministry of Health seems to be unaware of this. I also have no doubt that funding for these programs will be cut in the near future."

That's from Dr Gripper, Stevenson Memorial Hospital in Alliston, somebody on the front line, someone who's extremely concerned about the draconian power grab of Bill 50 and someone who would agree with me that this is the end of medicare as we know it. Let us be unequivocal about that.

The NDP have decided that they, behind cabinet doors, will end medicare. They'll delist psychoanalysis, in spite of all of the good arguments made throughout this world with respect to the efficiency and effectiveness and need for that particular service. They'll delist eye exams. They'll delist anything else they take a fancy to delist, and the public won't know a thing about it. We'll all have to read about it in the *Ontario Gazette*, I guess, when the regulations are passed.

They're introducing Bill 50 in the hazy, lazy days of summer here, so that the people of Ontario won't notice. Well, I'll tell you, there are a number of good people here who have noticed, who are fighting to retain the psychoanalysis treatment that they're in now. They've brought forward studies, world-class studies, some of those authored by people in our own province who are recognized in this field.

I recall very well, particularly Ruth Grier, back in the early 1980s when they were closing down the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital. This was her issue. This was the NDP's issue, the provision of mental health services in this province. I tell you, with Bill 50 and the social contract legislation and just about every other decision this government has taken in the health care field, it's the end of your credibility on these issues.

We'll take no more lectures about mental health services. We'll take no more lectures about long-term care, because the senior citizens of this province know that you're a bunch of bunk over there, that you'll say anything to get elected, absolutely anything to get elected. In the hazy days of summer, you bring forward Bill 50 to gut medicare as we know it. We're not going to put up with it—

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): Hey, it's Bart Simpson.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The member for Yorkview will come to order. The member for Downsview will return to his seat. Order. The honourable member for Durham East on a point of order.

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I don't believe as a member of this Legislature that the Legislature rules call for another member to call me a bum, and I would ask that he withdraw that, Mr Speaker. I think that's entirely out of order, entirely uncalled for, entirely unparliamentary and not worthy of comment in this House.

The Acting Speaker: I don't believe the honourable member said that in terms of my own hearing.

Mr Mammoliti: He said "bunk." Is "bunk" parliamentary?

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. I don't believe the honourable member said that. I will say, though, that the honourable member is continuing with quite inflammatory comments, and if he expects the order of the House to be at least reasonable, I would ask him to take that into consideration. But the honourable member for Simcoe West does have the floor.

1710

Mr Jim Wilson: I guess the truth hurts when you present it to the NDP. They like to believe that they can still go out and present the public with the fact that they claim they're managing the health care system and that they're reforming the health care system. I apologize to the member for Durham East if he finds that the truth is offensive.

But the member for Durham East didn't run in the last election as a Conservative or a Liberal, where we know very well you people would have thrown us off the all-candidates meeting stages. You would have continued to try to convince the public of Ontario that you have the corner on compassion. Now you bring in Bill 50, the expenditure control plan, in such a draconian way that it is unbelievable to me and my colleagues that you're getting away with this. It is unbelievable to me that the unions are not out front screaming bloody murder at you. It is unbelievable to me that the public of Ontario have not yet awoken to this issue.

I intend, during the time I have, to ensure that the public who are watching this, the several hundred thousand people who watch this every day, understand the seriousness of Bill 50, understand that this government doesn't consult with so-called stakeholders, that in 1991 it can make an agreement with the 23,000 physicians in this province and then in the summertime of 1993 introduce Bill 50, which guts any progress, and admittedly there's been some over the last couple of years in terms of trying to bring health care expenditures under control.

We've heard the government claim great credit for some initiatives. The cornerstone of that credit was the OMA-government memorandum of understanding framework agreement-joint management committee, and Bill 50 guts all of that.

The minister in her remarks this afternoon says: "It's a fail-safe bill. We won't use it. It's simply a gun to the head of the physicians and other health care practitioners out there who bill OHIP. It's a gun to their head to negotiate with us at the table. They're powers we think we need to bring health care expenditures under control."

I find that ironic, because you're at the table with the physicians. You don't know what agreement you're going to come up with, but you seem to know what draconian, closed-door cabinet powers you need, and you're ramming this bill through the Legislature.

I guess if the members over there find the truth difficult as I present it, perhaps they'll listen to Michael Dixon, the registrar of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, who wrote to me on July 26, 1993. He says:

"Dear Mr Wilson:

"The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario hopes that the introduction for second reading of Bill 50 will give members of the Legislature the opportunity to reflect on some of the fundamental changes to Ontario's health care system that could result from the passage of this bill.

"While the government has an obligation"—and I'll say this is a very reasonable letter from the College of Physicians and Surgeons—"to control costs, it cannot, even with the best information and intentions, practise medicine by setting out in regulation what the limits of particular services should be under different clinical circumstances. Yet this is the apparent effect of one of the suggested amendments to the Health Insurance Act contained in Bill 50.

"This amendment interposes the government, both between the patient and the health care provider, and between the patient and the actual place he or she must receive a particular medical service."

Dr Ruth and Dr Bob Rae have planted themselves between physician and patient, and they're going to sit there in their cabinet office and they're going to tell you how often you can have psychoanalysis. Maybe if a person has two heart attacks and has a little problem quitting smoking and has a third heart attack and needs medical services, you'll just decide that he or she doesn't deserve medical services. Maybe you'll cut them off. That has been suggested to me in letters from physicians.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member for Simcoe West has the floor. Interjections are out of

order. Other members will have the opportunity to debate when the time comes.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The member for Simcoe East, please address your remarks through the Chair.

Mr Jim Wilson: You're such a good guy, Mr Speaker, I know you're not part of the problem. But I will, as parliamentary decorum requires, address my remarks through you.

Michael Dixon, the registrar of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, goes on to state in his July 26 letter to me regarding Bill 50, "It also opens the door to a two-tier US-style health care system by introducing the notion that the patient must pay in certain circumstances for services which have previously been considered medically necessary."

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I can't believe what I'm hearing here in this Legislature. The members are continually interjecting. There's no order here. If there isn't, I move adjournment of the debate, if that's what you want.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member did not have the floor. I again want to remind members, if indeed you want to participate, the opportunity will be there. The member for Simcoe West has the floor.

Mr Jim Wilson: I appreciate the comments of the member for Simcoe East. It is a little difficult in here but I'm prepared to forge ahead on behalf of the people of this province. I'm prepared to forge ahead, as my colleagues are, on behalf of those currently in psychoanalysis, who are going to have their treatment gutted by this government, gutted by a government that had a corner on compassion, by a government in particular which carried mental health issues in this Legislature time and time again ad nauseam.

It's their opportunity to put forth what they believe are important services in this province. It's their big opportunity to do that, and what do they do? They gut those services. They fall back against everything they ever told us they stood for. I hope that the people of Ontario understand the widespread powers that the cabinet, Bob Rae, Ruth Grier—Dr Ruth—and their cohorts in the NDP—I hope people understand the massive power grab they are doing.

It is no coincidence—and I gave my button away today—that the Ontario Medical Association has put out big three-inch diameter buttons saying that Bob Rae's government is dangerous to your health, and full-page newspaper ads: unprecedented in this province. The Liberals picked on the physicians in 1986 and they had a fight and that was great, but this is unprecedented in terms of the OMA's determination to fight this legisla-

tion, not on behalf of doctors or their paycheques as the NDP believe, but because physicians go through a number of years of service training.

In fact, we spend \$2 million per doctor training them. What we find is so many of them going to the United States, and tomorrow in my remarks I want to bring forward some local examples from the village of Beeton in my riding and from New Tecumseth and Alliston and Tottenham and Tecumseth, where we have a shortage of physicians because of the NDP health care policy.

Dr Dixon, in his July 26 letter to me, continues, and I'll repeat because I don't think the NDP members are listening, even though I am trying, at the top of my lungs, as forcefully as possible, to drive some points home, some fundamental points that even they should be able to understand.

Dr Dixon says, "It also opens the door," referring to Bill 50, "to a two-tier US-style health care system by introducing the notion that the patient must pay in certain circumstances for services which had previously been considered medically necessary and have thus been fully insured." We've already seen the delisting and the introduction of user fees for people who require physical examinations. The unemployed truck driver who has to, by law, have a physical examination to renew his truck licence each year now has to pay \$50, \$75, \$150 out of his or her own pocket for that service.

We've seen a delisting of many other previously medically insured services by this government, a government that I say would be climbing the walls around here if any other party in this Legislature or anywhere else in this country, including the federal government, had ever brought in legislation like Bill 50.

1720

Here the college of physicians and surgeons, the governing body—not a political body and I hope the government understands that—of all physicians, and physicians are NDPers too; they're Liberals, they're Tories, they're other parties. They're good people. They're trying to do a job and they're being driven out of this province. We're subsidizing Bill and Hillary Clinton's health care system at \$2 million per physician that Bob Rae and Dr Ruth drive out of this province. Shame on you, NDP. Shame on you.

Dr Dixon goes on. He says, "Deeming certain kinds of services (or a specific number of occasions of a particular service) to be uninsured will simply transfer the cost to either the patient or a third party."

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: As a matter of fact, the federal Tory government has been beating up the province of Ontario and that's why we're fighting to maintain our health services.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): That is not a point of order, nor a point of privilege either.

The member for Simcoe West.

Mr Jim Wilson: I may never get through Dr Dixon's page-and-a-half letter, but I'm going to forge ahead. I want to respond to what the member has just said, because it's totally untrue. How you people believe the stuff that your cabinet ministers tell you—do you not do any independent thinking over there?

Why don't you phone the federal treasury and ask how much money was transferred to the provinces and to the province of Ontario this year over last year? You will see that for education and health care there is an increase in transfers. The federal government has capped those transfers at about 3% to 5% per year. It's up year-over-year.

You go ahead and unilaterally expand welfare programs. You don't spend the money you're given for health care and education on health care and education. You won't let the federal auditor come in and audit your books on the envelope of money that's sent, so that the people of Canada, the taxpayers of Canada, can actually trust that you spend the billions of dollars you receive from Ottawa each year. You won't allow that to happen. You won't allow committees of this Legislature to examine in detail those estimates.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): The truth.

Mr Jim Wilson: They don't want to know the truth. They want to just believe in the mythology they've been spreading for 20 years. I say, enough is enough; we've had it with you. And Bill 50 is the last straw: Bill 50 finally brings out what this government and the NDP are all about, and what they're all about is a slash-and-burn approach to health care.

Mr Mammoliti: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Are you going to let this go on?

The Acting Speaker: That is not a point of order. We will have the opportunity to have questions or comments when the member who has the floor is done. I highly recommend that you—

Mr Mammoliti: He's going to hurt himself.

Mr Jim Wilson: I wouldn't worry about my health, sir.

The Acting Speaker: Order. I highly recommend that members do participate when questions or comments come up. The member for Simcoe West.

Mr Jim Wilson: The truth hurts, and the truth about Parliament is that it's a substitute for war in our democracy. I am allowed to stand here—

Interjections.

Mr Jim Wilson: Seventy-five per cent of the world doesn't live in a democracy, doesn't have the opportunity to elect a member to speak out forcefully on their behalf. When the government refuses to listen to the people of Ontario, we have no choice in opposition but to get up and, as forcefully as every fibre in my body

can muster, bring forward the points, the issues, the concerns we're hearing from the people of Ontario.

If you don't like it, why did you run for Parliament? If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen. They should just resign and call an election. We'll look after all of you if you don't like it here. At 16% in the polls, there are very few of you coming back, very few of you.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): It's 13%. They're at 13%.

Mr Jim Wilson: They're at 13%. My God, news breaking. They've just plummeted. As a result of my speech, they've gone down another three points since this morning.

Dr Dixon writes, "As it stands, Bill 50 provides for limits imposed by regulation on a patient's legitimate need for essential medical services"—

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member for Ottawa Rideau.

Mrs Yvonne O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau): Mr Speaker, I don't believe there is a quorum present in the chamber.

The Acting Speaker: Could the Clerk check if there's a quorum present.

A quorum is present. The member for Simcoe West may continue.

Mr Jim Wilson: "As it stands, Bill 50 provides for limits to be imposed by regulation on a patient's legitimate need for essential medical services and on a provider's moral duty to render those services"—that's a physician's, a health care professional's, moral duty to render those services. There is such a thing as the Hippocratic oath taken by physicians; Bill 50 is going to make it very difficult, if not impossible, for physicians to ensure that they don't break the Hippocratic oath.

I think cabinet ministers should take such an oath to the people of this province, such an oath that what they say in a campaign they won't go against when they get into government; such an oath that would require cabinet ministers, Bob Rae, Dr Ruth, the NDP cohorts, its party, its members, to go to the public when they want to make major changes, such as contained in Bill 50, when they want to make a draconian power grab unto themselves, to tell every patient in this province: what services he or she will be entitled to under medicare; how often that treatment will be provided; who will provide that treatment; where that treatment will be provided. There are many towns and villages now that don't have any physicians at all, and the few who are in some of those villages and towns like Beaton are moving, and I intend to talk about that tomorrow.

Dr Dixon goes on to say, "It precludes professional judgement and denies legitimate essential services to

those who need to receive more than the arbitrarily imposed number of said services. For example, taking only the area of cancer care, it raises questions such as"—

Interjections.

Mr Jim Wilson: Mr Speaker, I'm talking about cancer patients and I would appreciate some courtesy from members of the government about the thousands of cancer patients in this province. Perhaps if they're not interested in my views, they'll be interested in the views of cancer patients in this province, something that all of us could be inflicted with at some time, may need a physician, may need treatment, may need it often. Bill 50 will deny that.

In the case of cancer patients, Dr Dixon says Bill 50 raises the following questions:

"Who would determine how many treatments and of what kind could be rendered by a particular doctor in a particular institution to a particular patient?

"What would happen to that doctor or institution if the approved number of treatments were exceeded?

"What would happen to the patient if he or she reached the government-prescribed 'limit' and was either refused further treatment or could not afford to buy the services required above the government limits?"

There have been other cases. I raised the one of the person who has had three heart attacks and may have a problem quitting smoking, and the government will say: "Well, since you don't look after yourself, if you have a fourth heart attack, you're out of luck. You're out of luck, buddy."

Or what we've already seen in this province: the rationing of services with respect to lungs. We remember very well Mr Decter, a couple of years ago, the Deputy Minister of Health, along with Frances Lankin, being quoted in the *Globe and Mail* saying, "Yes, we might not let 70-year-olds get new lungs, because that's not cost-effective." Well, that's sad. It's sad if it's your mom or dad, brother or sister, sibling, friend, who needs a new set of lungs, who needs a heart transplant, who needs all kinds of medically insured services. We're not just talking about—

Mr Mammoliti: Bill 50.

Mr Jim Wilson: This is Bill 50. We're not talking about electrolysis. We all let that be delisted a couple of years ago, because we felt it was more for cosmetic reasons, so we let it go without saying much. We knew it was the tip of the iceberg.

Bill 50 doesn't talk about frivolous medical services that perhaps never should have been insured under OHIP in the first place. It speaks to medically necessary treatment, medically necessary services. You have to get that through your heads, folks. I guess that's impossible. I feel sorry for the patients of this province.

The Acting Speaker: Please address the Chair.

Mr Jim Wilson: Michael Dixon concludes by saying:

"Cost controls are a fact of life. The issue, however, is where to put the controls so that essential medical and health care judgements are made by the most informed and responsible people, within the financial limits defined.

"Health care decisions are individual decisions: Individuals have different health care needs, and professionals must have the flexibility to exercise their professional judgement in the best interests of their patients. If costs are to be controlled in a humane manner, those controls must be based on front-line, clinical judgements, not based on government decree."

1730

I couldn't have said it better myself. The college of physicians and surgeons, a non-political, non-partisan body, is trying desperately to get a message across to this government that Bill 50 should be withdrawn, that it is draconian, that it is unprecedented and that it is absolutely unfair to the patients in this province.

Bill 50 also, in addition to limiting necessary medical services, has already had the effect, in conjunction with Bill 48, the social contract legislation that the NDP already passed in this Legislature—the NDP and the Liberals rejected our amendments that would have made it more fair and workable to physicians, to hospital workers, to nurses, to teachers, to a number of other groups.

I want to read to you from the Ontario Medicine magazine of July 12, 1993. It says, "Disillusioned Doc Throwing Farewell Bash: Going South With a Bang." It refers to Dr George Wong, a Windsor doctor, an area represented by the NDP, an area represented in cabinet by the NDP.

"Dr George Wong, probably Windsor's longest-serving cardiologist, will head for the brighter medical and political pastures of Phoenix, Arizona, this fall. But before he goes, he'll do something many of his forerunners, others who have bolted the Canadian medical system for the US, haven't. He's throwing a party for all the patients he served over the past 17 years.

"Dr Wong says he's going to the US because he's fed up with both the way medicine is administered in Canada and the general political situation. For physicians, he says, the 'freedom of practice and the freedom of movement are slowly eroding away.'

"Every time there is a budget problem and every time the government would not balance the budget, it's always the physician or the medical caretaker who gets blamed for doing wrong," says Dr Wong.

"Basically," he goes on to say, 'the number one reason for leaving is that we don't want to sit back and fight with the government any more.'"

You win, folks. You've driven Dr Wong out of Windsor, you've driven hundreds of physicians out of this province to other provinces, to the United States. There was a health care fair about a month and a half ago in Toronto; 500 physicians showed up and all wanted to go to the United States.

Mr Perruzza: Yeah, to the United States. Oh yeah, because they've got a better health care system there.

Mr Mammoliti: They can't change their minds and come back later on. If they want to go, let them stay there.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member for Yorkview, the member for Downsview, please come to order. We are attempting to debate a bill in second reading and you are not giving the member who has the floor an opportunity. Please.

Mr Perruzza: On a point of order, Mr Speaker—

The Acting Speaker: There is no point of order. Please take your seat. Take your seat. There is no point of order.

Mr Perruzza: How do you know I don't have a point of order?

The Acting Speaker: Because I happen to be standing here attempting to get the House to order. That's the problem we have. The member for Simcoe West, please continue, address the Chair, and would other members please respect the orders of the House. It's that simple.

Mr Jim Wilson: Thank you, Mr Speaker. It was interesting, one of the reasons you had to rise from your chair, of course, was that I was talking about the mass exodus of physicians to the United States, physicians that we, as Ontario taxpayers, have paid at least \$2 million each to educate.

When they graduate or when they've even been in service here, like Dr Wong, for 17 years, they now find the political climate so bad, so distasteful, so unprofessional, so threatening to their very livelihoods and their families' wellbeing and to their patients' wellbeing, so distasteful that they're leaving their province.

They're leaving a province where they paid taxes. They helped build the roads and the bridges and the sewer plants and all the infrastructure. Their taxes helped pay for our education system, but it's so bad now, because of the introduction of Bill 50 and because of this government's mismanagement of health care, that they feel compelled to go to the US—

Mr Perruzza: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I know for a fact that all the doctors that I've spoken to like the health care system and like to practise medicine here. That's absolutely untrue and false.

The Acting Speaker: Order. That is unparliamentary. All members here are honourable members. Would

you please withdraw what you have just said.

Mr Perruzza: If anything that I've said has offended—

The Acting Speaker: I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr Perruzza: I have no problem withdrawing. The fact that there's a lot of doctors who like to practise in this country—

The Acting Speaker: Thank you and please take your seat.

Mr Jim Wilson: As I was saying, when I was referring to the mass exodus of physicians, many of them are top names in North America. We happen to have had many of the best specialists in the world located primarily here in Toronto, which is a regional clearing house for Ontario.

Those people have already gone, and I've raised it many times in this Legislature during question period and during debate. I've read into the record the names of dozens of physicians, top household names in their specialities in North America and the world who have gone to the US, and we no longer have the use of their services.

In fact, the ironic thing is we send many patients down to the US. They have to follow the specialists to the US. We pay high fees in the US to have those patients treated in certain specialties because the NDP drove them out of Ontario. Where are the cost savings to government? Where is the compassion they claim to have once had?

The member for Yorkview said about physicians that were going to the US during his interjection a couple of minutes ago, "If they want to go, let them go there and stay there." That is a disgusting attitude for a member of provincial Parliament to have, or any member of any Legislature in this country to have, that when we spend at least \$2 million training physicians, the NDP have an attitude, "If they want to go to the US, let them go and let them stay there." That's what the member for Yorkview clearly said. I know Hansard picked it up and it is the crux of the problem that I'm trying to address here.

I am trying to get that mentality out of the NDP's head. Physicians, nurses, health care professionals, chiropractors, all of our specialists, all of the 24 regulated health professions, including midwives, are not bad people. They're good people trying to provide services to the patients of this province. They are willing to talk about cost controls. They have saved this province close to \$2 billion over the last two years through a negotiated process with this government, and they are trying to work with this government. But this government brings in Bill 50, hits them over the head and the result is they're leaving this province. They are leaving in droves.

Dr Wong is one of many. I hope the member for

Yorkview and his other cohorts over there who don't normally participate in a constructive way in debate—their only way of getting by in life is to heckle the opposition—I hope the member for Yorkview will take it upon himself to do the decent thing and send Dr Wong a letter of apology. Dr Wong deserves no less from this government.

Tom Dickson, president of the Ontario Medical Association, feels that Bill 50 is part of a sinister plot being hatched by the NDP government. That's not Jim Wilson, the member for Simcoe West; that's Tom Dickson, the president of the Ontario Medical Association. He says:

"There is a much larger, more sinister agenda at play here, a plan by the Ministry of Health to override almost all of the OMA's agreements with the government and impose massive cuts on medical services and patient care. The government is using its current fiscal situation as an opportunity to pass this very dangerous legislation. There are no limits on what services can be restricted by the government under Bill 50.

"It's not just psychotherapy or eye examinations, as originally proposed. The power to ration insured and medically necessary services applies to everyone and everything. The number of medical services deemed appropriate can just be decided unilaterally by some bureaucrat saving money, some unaccountable bureaucrat who has no agenda but the government's agenda."

1740

It's a sad day in Ontario when the president of the Ontario Medical Association, who represents physicians of all different political stripes, must feel compelled to come out with such strong language.

Tom Dickson, I think, is completely accurate in his remarks. We know he's accurate because when we look at Bill 50, the government says, in section 1, that section 1 will allow the Ministry of Health to carry out the initiatives identified in the expenditure control plan of April 23, 1993, without putting the government, a minister of the crown, an employer in the health sector or a health care provider at risk of facing legal action.

That is an absolute admission by Dr Ruth and company and Bob Rae that they know they're breaking a legally signed agreement with the Ontario Medical Association, and other agreements with health care professionals. They know they are going back on their word, that they're bypassing any legitimate process to come to terms with cost controls. They're simply taking a draconian power grab unto themselves. The legislation speaks to that. It gives the government immunity from any court challenges that may come.

It also means that patients in this province will have no ability in court to challenge the government should they be denied a medically necessary service. If you don't get the set of lungs you need and you die, your

family can't go to the government; Bill 50 gives it immunity for that. It's a sad day in Ontario. It's a very sad day.

If the government wants to get up and say the legislation doesn't do that, then why is the legislation so broad in its power grab? It is unspecific.

All of the letters I've read to you, the comments I've put forth from other people, professionals in the medical community, very clearly indicate that the legislation will restrict medical services by regulation, which means the public will not have the opportunity to know what's coming at them until mom or dad dies. You'll wonder why the physician couldn't help. Then you'll want to sue the physician who is forced by this government to break the Hippocratic oath. The physician will have to say: "It was the NDP government that did it. I couldn't do any more. We were limited in the number of procedures we could give."

Take the issue of psychoanalysis. I have tons of paperwork on this, tons. I want to commend many, many people in this province who took the initiative for the first time in their lives to come forward and to take on the NDP government and to point out to the public the need for psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysis, in many of the studies I have read over the past few weeks, can be a life or death issue. It's not just a quality-of-life issue, although it is primarily a quality-of-life issue. But it can also end in suicide. It can also end in people inflicting pain upon themselves both mentally and physically, to the point where they die. We're not just talking about cardiac surgery or lung surgery or all kinds of services that I think everybody in Ontario would agree are medically necessary; we're also talking about mental health services. Psychoanalysis is a prime example of that.

I want to read, as soon as I find it, from an absolutely superb letter that was sent to me by Ms Marnie Judge. It says, "Concerns to be raised regarding delisting psychoanalysis."

I only bring psychoanalysis to the House's attention, as Mrs Sullivan, the Liberal Health critic, did as one example. It's an example that the public has latched on to because of the good work done by Marnie Judge and a number of other people to raise this issue.

The public is responding in terms of hundreds of letters and petitions that we've read in this House because that issue's been made public. But I'm here to tell the public here today that psychoanalysis is just one issue. With all medically necessary services, all those people on waiting lists right now can't be assured that medicare will be there to help them. They can't be assured there will be a physician around to get them off the waiting lists. We know the waiting lists for a number of absolutely essential services have been growing and growing, because what Bill 50 speaks to is

not just delisting a specific service, but it drives the physician who may provide that service out of this province.

I don't know how the government could ignore the fact of that. A world-class lung transplant team might not even be around to help you if you're in that situation. World-class cardiac teams might not be around to help you because they would have left the province because, for instance, of Dr Wong's quote about the political situation, that it's just so unbearable, he had to go.

But back to Marnie Judge and psychoanalysis. I just want to read some of the comments. She says:

"It seems that few if any of the officials that I have communicated with have any understanding of what is involved in psychoanalysis. Many general physicians are also unclear of the process.

"It is not the same as supportive psychotherapy, only more often. Supportive therapy serves to strengthen the patient's resources for the moment by 'leaning' on the therapist. Analysis has as its goal to help the patient create a strong, healthy personality system, with insight, that can ultimately function independently. This is achieved through the regressions that take place within the analytic sessions. If sessions were spaced far apart (as in twice a week)"—Bill 50 has the potential to limit sessions to twice a week or once a week or never at all, depending on what mood the government's in that week—"it would not be safe for the patient to allow the necessary ego regressions to occur. The analytic work could not be done.

"The goal of analysis is its eventual conclusion." That's important because the government has argued that these sessions go on far too long, and there seems to be an argument put forth that they are unproductive because of the number of years that may be required for a cure or at least a control of the illness.

"The patient is not just an isolated individual. The patient also interacts and impacts on the lives of those around them: parents, spouses, coworkers, and importantly, their children. Optimum mental health will affect not only the patients in treatment but everyone around them.

"Community mental health centres staffed by nurses, social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists are necessary and will reach a broader base of patients. However, there still remains the group of patients who need and require a more intensive analytical treatment. That should remain a medical not a government decision.

"Those in psychoanalysis want a resolution to their illnesses, not to be supported indefinitely in twice weekly therapy or by self-help groups, which once again are mostly supportive in nature.

"Increased needs for costly in-patient treatment will

result from delisting analysis. Psychoanalysts as a rule do not hospitalize or use medications, allowing patients to be more productive at work and at home.

"Psychoanalysis is frequently the treatment of last resort for patients who have tried supportive or once- or twice-weekly therapy, medications and costly hospitalizations. To remove their treatment now would be devastating on a major financial and human scale.

"By delisting analysis the government won't be saving any money. Analysts will just increase their patient load and fill their schedules with patients for supportive psychotherapy. More people will have access to treatment, but for many it is ineffective treatment. That seems to be a waste of taxpayers' money.

"Many government officials have called patients in analysis 'the walking wounded.' It is the efficacy of analysis that allows the wounded to be walking, instead of taking up costly hospital beds and being a further drain on community and social services. Analysis allows the 'walking wounded' to be walking, to hold down jobs and to be consumers and productive members of society.

"Health care dollars are being spent on many lifestyle-related illnesses. Smoking, alcohol consumption, lack of exercise and drug abuse all cost the taxpayer large sums of money. Those with mental illness did not choose their illnesses. They are largely an invisible population by the nature of their illness. Perhaps it is because they are invisible that the government feels it can dispense with them."

1750

Marnie Judge has really, I think, in an emotional way put forward a tremendous argument of the need for psychoanalysis, the need for the government to withdraw Bill 50. We also know from a number of experts in the field that Marnie—and that's her pseudonym—is a person who knows at first hand the need for psychoanalysis, the need for frequent treatment. As she very clearly said, and as the hundreds of letters we've had—and I think all members must have received these letters and petitions—have clearly pointed out to legislators, these patients want a cure, they want to come to an end of their analysis sessions, and they're not wasting the taxpayer dollar because they are using medically necessary services. The frequency of those services is as necessary as the services themselves. I hope the government will understand that.

From the Clarké Institute of Psychiatry, now really just referred to as the Clarke, we've had some excellent research provided to us by Dr Norman Doidge. In this particular letter, he goes forward in his argument to contradict every point the government made in a backgrounder that was provided to the medical profession, in which the government argued a number of points in favour of delisting or limiting the number of times a patient may undergo psychoanalysis.

I want to point out, because I do not have time, just a couple of things. Dr Doidge refutes what he calls bullet point number 5 in the backgrounder by the ministry. He says, "The fifth bullet states that one hour a week is 'the coverage provided by most US insurance companies.'" This is the government's rationale. They're using US insurance companies as a basis for Canadian medicare services. Shame, NDP, shame. You used to hate the US. What happened? Now you're borrowing their analytical approach to rationing health care services.

"Where once-a-week limits have been imposed there have been no net savings and it has been seen as disastrous for patients, because treatments are not determined by medical necessity. The Clinton administration Mental Health Task Force recommended against these arbitrary limits."

In fact, the US is trying to go in the opposite direction now. Having seen the wisdom of the arguments put forth by psychiatrists and people in the medical community and patients with respect to psychoanalysis, the US is now supposedly going to try and go in the opposite direction.

I don't have time to read all this, but it goes on to talk about a very important precedent set in the world; that is, that a decade ago Germany delisted psychoanalysis. It limited the number of times a patient may see his or her physician for the purposes of psychoanalysis. More recently, the German government had to reinstate the original psychoanalysis program and the frequency of the availability of those services because hospital admissions went up dramatically over that decade. It wasn't a political decision so much as it was based on analytical data which clearly showed that mental health patients who could not receive services from their own physicians simply ended up in the emergency wards.

We shouldn't even have to look at the German example, because we have examples at home ourselves. When we had deinstitutionalization in this province—it's still continuing and, granted, all three parties share blame in this, so we should all acknowledge what went wrong and not repeat the mistakes of the past—a number of people were thrown out of institutions. They went on the street and they ended up in our hospitals. We don't know what happened to thousands of them.

The NDP used to love to give the Tory party full blame for that. Then, when the Liberals got in, they spent five years giving them full blame for that. Now we see that they want to go beyond that. They've closed 5,400 hospital beds in the past 18 months. In my area of the province and many areas I tour as Health critic, there simply isn't a bed to be found. You sit around in the emergency room—that's if you can sit—you bleed on a stretcher for a few hours and you're sent back home. There simply aren't the services there used to be in this province.

We know that in the mental health area, psychoanalysis is necessary. We know its frequency is high but necessary. I call upon the government to withdraw this legislation.

I repeat to the public that psychoanalysis is one particular issue with respect to Bill 50 that's captured a large segment of the population in terms of their lobbying efforts. But beware, public, everything is under threat with this government. Be aware that Bob Rae and Dr Ruth Grier have decided that they're going to tell you how often, what type of service, from which physician and where that service may be available.

They're going to drive more physicians out of the province. They're capping physicians in a unilateral way. We all agree on cost control, but what's happening in many of our communities—it's happening in eastern Ontario where Mr Jordan, the member for Lanark-Renfrew, is from; it's happening in Simcoe county, the area Mr McLean, the member for Simcoe East, and I represent; it's happening anywhere I go in this province—is that general practitioners are reaching their cap simply by doing office hours. They're reaching their government-imposed cap on gross billings and they're not covering the small-town hospitals. There's no incentive for them to go and cover the emergency room after hours because they've already reached their cap.

I think what the government doesn't realize about physicians is that they're in business too. They're not simply there to fulfil the whims of whatever political party happens to be in office. They are not tools of politicians. They are independent practitioners, as are so many other people in those 24 regulated health professions which this government took such pride in regulating and reregulating through the Regulated Health Professions Act legislation of a couple of years ago. This government took such pride in bringing some reform into the system and to strengthening the role of colleges.

We're going to see a bill come up perhaps later this week called Bill 100 which deals with sexual abuse of patients by health care professionals, something the government has taken very seriously. It's taken very seriously by all three parties. But the government seems to think that physicians and health care professionals—because it doesn't like professionals and it sure as heck doesn't like physicians—are little pawns in this chess game it sees as Ontario's health care system. On that grid, they're going to move pawns wherever they like. Well, the pawns are moving south. They're all going off the south end of the board. They're going down to support Bill and Hillary Clinton's health care reform. They're leaving Simcoe county, they're leaving Renfrew, they're leaving all areas of the province. We always had a shortage in northern Ontario, and that shortage is acute now as a result of the NDP's moves.

I have many more letters, many more briefs, many more analytical arguments that have been presented, but the agreement of the House leaders was that I would end in about three minutes and resume the debate tomorrow.

I want to repeat, because perhaps some taxpayers have joined us over the last hour and didn't hear how I started, that the fact is that this government has brought in the most hypocritical, draconian legislation in the form of Bill 50. No other party at any point in our history in this province to date brought forward a bill like Bill 50, which allows the cabinet behind closed doors to dictate how many medical services you'll receive, how often, where and who will provide them—it will limit your ability to get those medical services.

Don't believe the rhetoric of the government. We know on so many other issues that what they've told us is simply not factual; in fact, untrue. I don't believe they know what they're doing with respect to Bill 50. Had any other party brought forward this legislation at any point in our history, the NDP would be hanging from the chandeliers. There is no doubt about it. I repeat that. They'd have gone nuts. They'd have gone absolutely crazy. They'd have accused those Tories of gutting medicare. They would have accused the Liberals of ending OHIP.

They do it in the hazy days of summer, hoping no one will pay attention, hoping no one will bother to pick up the phone and phone Bob Rae's office, phone Ruth Grier's office, Dr Ruth. Phone your NDP MPPs and tell them you don't want Bill 50. Join with your physicians, who have spent a great deal of their own money now trying to fight this government, with the message that Bob Rae's government is bad. I don't know any other way to put it. "Bob Rae's government could be bad for your health," I think the button reads.

Mr McLean: Just ask the seniors.

Mr Jim Wilson: Ask the seniors, as the member for Simcoe East points out, about the \$150 million in new user fees. Don't take any more crap from politicians,

particularly NDP politicians, about user fees. They exist in the hundreds of millions of dollars, and I say to Jane Leitch and the Senior Citizens' Consumer Alliance for Long-Term Care Reform and all those other people who keep telling me they don't exist: They exist. They were brought in by the Liberals, and they've been increased. Take an ambulance ride; it's right through the roof now. Rich or poor, a rubble on the street, you get sent a bill for ambulance services. Try and get mom or dad or grandma or grandpa into a long-term care facility nursing home: Whack, you're hit with hundreds of dollars of user fees. Try and get some medically necessary services in your own hospital and you need a Visa card up front.

That's what the NDP's done to health care in this province. We have a US-style, two-tier system. Don't take any more crap from politicians, people of Ontario. The NDP is destroying medicare. Bill 50 destroys medicare. Let's not be wishy-washy about it. User fees exist to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars in this province. We have to discuss where they should be appropriately placed. No: They just unilaterally, behind closed cabinet doors, increase them.

We have a two-tier system. If you want a medically necessary service in this province—I'm just about to wind up—and you can't get it within a reasonable period of time and you have money, you go to the US. There are many US cities that are now clearinghouses for Ontario taxpayers because they can't get the service here. We have private medicine in this country. There's a CAT scan out in Calgary where we send Ontario residents and we pay cash up front to a private sector operator because our own government can't provide that medically necessary service. I ask the people of Ontario to join us to fight Bill 50.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. By unanimous agreement of the Legislature earlier today, we now move on. It is 6 o'clock. We now move on to orders of the day.

Report continues in volume B.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor/Lieutenant-gouverneur: Lt Col The Hon/L'hon Henry N.R. Jackman CM, KStJ, BA, LLB, LLD

Speaker/Président: Hon/L'hon David Warner

Clerk/Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Senior Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Journals/Greffier adjoint principal et Greffier des journaux: Alex D. McFedries

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees/Greffière adjointe et Greffière des comités: Deborah Deller

Sergeant at Arms/Sergent d'armes: Thomas Stelling

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Algoma	Wildman, Hon/L'hon Bud	ND	Minister of Environment and Energy, minister responsible for native affairs / ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Énergie, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A.	L	
Beaches-Woodbine	Lankin, Hon/L'hon Frances	ND	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Brampton North/-Nord	McClelland, Carman	L	
Brampton South/-Sud	Callahan, Robert V.	L	
Brant-Haldimand	Eddy, Ron	L	
Brantford	Ward, Hon/L'hon Brad	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Finance / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Finances
Bruce	Elston, Murray J.	L	
Burlington South/-Sud	Jackson, Cameron	PC	
Cambridge	Farnan, Hon/L'hon Mike	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Education and Training / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation
Carleton	Sterling, Norman W.	PC	
Carleton East/-Est	Morin, Gilles E.	L	Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président et Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Chatham-Kent	Hope, Randy R.	ND	
Cochrane North/-Nord	Wood, Len	ND	
Cochrane South/-Sud	Bisson, Gilles	ND	
Cornwall	Cleary, John C.	L	
Don Mills	Johnson, David	PC	
Dovercourt	Silipo, Hon/L'hon Tony	ND	Minister of Community and Social Services / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Downsview	Perruzza, Anthony	ND	
Dufferin-Peel	Tilson, David	PC	
Durham Centre/-Centre	White, Drummond	ND	
Durham East/-Est	Mills, Gord	ND	
Durham West/-Ouest	Wiseman, Jim	ND	
Durham-York	O'Connor, Larry	ND	
Eglinton	Poole, Dianne	L	
Elgin	North, Peter	ND	
Essex-Kent	Hayes, Pat	ND	
Essex South/-Sud	Vacant	L	
Etobicoke-Humber	Henderson, D. James	L	
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Grier, Hon/L'hon Ruth A.	ND	Minister of Health / ministre de la Santé
Etobicoke-Rexdale	Philip, Hon/L'hon Ed	ND	Minister of Municipal Affairs / ministre des Affaires municipales
Etobicoke West/-Ouest	Stockwell, Chris	PC	
Fort William	McLeod, Lyn	L	Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition
Fort York	Marchese, Rosario	ND	
Frontenac-Addington	Wilson, Hon/L'hon Fred	ND	Minister without Portfolio / ministre sans portefeuille
Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill	PC	
Guelph	Fletcher, Derek	ND	
Halton Centre/-Centre	Sullivan, Barbara	L	
Halton North/-Nord	Duignan, Noel	ND	
Hamilton Centre/-Centre	Christopherson, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services / solliciteur général et ministre des Services correctionnels
Hamilton East/-Est	Mackenzie, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Hamilton Mountain	Charlton, Hon/L'hon Brian	ND	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, government House leader and minister responsible for the automobile insurance review / président du Conseil de gestion, leader parlementaire du gouvernement et ministre délégué à l'Assurance-automobile
Hamilton West/-Ouest	Allen, Hon/L'hon Richard	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère du Développement économique et du Commerce

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Hastings-Peterborough	Buchanan, Hon/L'hon Elmer	ND	Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation
High Park-Swansea	Ziamba, Hon/L'hon Elaine	ND	Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for human rights, disability issues, seniors' issues and race relations / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre déléguée aux Droits de la personne, aux Affaires des personnes handicapées, aux Affaires des personnes âgées et aux Relations interraciales
Huron	Klopp, Paul	ND	
Kenora	Miclash, Frank	L	
Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles	Wilson, Gary	ND	
Kitchener	Ferguson, Will	Ind	
Kitchener-Wilmot	Cooper, Mike	ND	
Lake Nipigon/Lac-Nipigon	Pouliot, Hon/L'hon Gilles	ND	Minister of Transportation, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Transports, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones
Lambton	MacKinnon, Ellen	ND	
Lanark-Renfrew	Jordan, W. Leo	PC	
Lawrence	Cordiano, Joseph	L	
Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W.	PC	
Lincoln	Hansen, Ron	ND	
London Centre/-Centre	Boyd, Hon/L'hon Marion	ND	Attorney General, minister responsible for women's issues / procureure générale, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
London North/-Nord	Cunningham, Dianne	PC	
London South/-Sud	Winninger, David	ND	
Markham	Cousens, W. Donald	PC	
Middlesex	Mathysen, Irene	ND	
Mississauga East/-Est	Sola, John	Ind	
Mississauga North/-Nord	Offer, Steven	L	
Mississauga South/-Sud	Marland, Margaret	PC	
Mississauga West/-Ouest	Mahoney, Steven W.	L	
Muskoka-Georgian Bay	Waters, Daniel	ND	
Nepean	Daigeler, Hans	L	
Niagara Falls	Harrington, Margaret H.	ND	
Niagara South/-Sud	Coppen, Hon/L'hon Shirley	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation; chief government whip / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs ; whip en chef du gouvernement
Nickel Belt	Laughren, Hon/L'hon Floyd	ND	Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances
Nipissing	Harris, Michael	PC	
Norfolk	Jamison, Norm	ND	
Northumberland	Fawcett, Joan M.	L	
Oakville South/-Sud	Carr, Gary	PC	
Oakwood	Rizzo, Tony	ND	
Oriole	Caplan, Elinor	L	
Oshawa	Pilkey, Hon/L'hon Allan	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Municipal Affairs / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Affaires municipales
Ottawa Centre/-Centre	Gigantes, Hon/L'hon Evelyn	ND	Minister of Housing / ministre du Logement
Ottawa East/-Est	Grandmaître, Bernard C.	L	
Ottawa-Rideau	O'Neill, Yvonne	L	
Ottawa South/-Sud	McGuinty, Dalton J.P.	L	
Ottawa West/-Ouest	Chiarelli, Robert	L	
Oxford	Sutherland, Kimble	ND	
Parkdale	Ruprecht, Tony	L	
Parry Sound	Eves, Ernie	PC	
Perth	Haslam, Karen	ND	
Peterborough	Carter, Jenny	ND	
Port Arthur	Wark-Martyn, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Health / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Santé
Prescott and Russell / Prescott et Russell	Poirier, Jean	L	
Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings/Prince Edward-	Johnson, Paul R.	ND	
Lennox-Hastings-Sud			
Quinte	O'Neil, Hugh P.	L	
Rainy River	Hampton, Hon/L'hon Howard	ND	Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Renfrew North/-Nord	Conway, Sean G.	L	

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Riverdale	Churley, Hon/L'hon Marilyn	ND	Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
S-D-G & East Grenville / S-D-G et Grenville-Est	Villeneuve, Noble	PC	
St Andrew-St Patrick	Akande, Zanana	ND	
St Catharines	Bradley, James J.	L	
St Catharines-Brock	Haeck, Christel	ND	
St George-St David	Murphy, Tim	L	
Sarnia	Huget, Bob	ND	
Sault Ste Marie / Sault-Sainte-Marie	Martin, Tony	ND	
Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry	L	
Scarborough Centre/-Centre	Owens, Stephen	ND	
Scarborough East/-Est	Frankford, Robert	ND	
Scarborough-Ellesmere	Warner, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Speaker / Président
Scarborough North/-Nord	Curling, Alvin	L	
Scarborough West/-Ouest	Swarbrick, Hon/L'hon Anne	ND	Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation / ministre de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs
Simcoe Centre/-Centre	Wessenger, Paul	ND	
Simcoe East/-Est	McLean, Allan K.	PC	
Simcoe West/-Ouest	Wilson, Jim	PC	
Sudbury	Murdock, Sharon	ND	
Sudbury East/-Est	Martel, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Timiskaming	Ramsay, David	L	
Victoria-Haliburton	Drainville, Dennis	Ind	
Waterloo North/-Nord	Witmer, Elizabeth	PC	
Welland-Thorold	Kormos, Peter	ND	
Wellington	Arnott, Ted	PC	
Wentworth East/-Est	Morrow, Mark	ND	
Wentworth North/-Nord	Abel, Donald	ND	
Willowdale	Harnick, Charles	PC	
Wilson Heights	Kwinter, Monte	L	
Windsor-Riverside	Cooke, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Minister of Education and Training, minister responsible for the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / ministre de l'Éducation et de la Formation, ministre responsable du Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main- d'oeuvre
Windsor-Sandwich	Dadamo, George	ND	
Windsor-Walkerville	Lessard, Wayne	ND	
York Centre/-Centre	Sorbara, Gregory S.	L	
York East/-Est	Malkowski, Gary	ND	
York Mills	Turnbull, David	PC	
York North/-Nord	Beer, Charles	L	
York South/-Sud	Rae, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	Premier, President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre, président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires gouvernementales
Yorkview	Mammoliti, George	ND	

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of Ontario**

Third Session, 35th Parliament

**Assemblée législative
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Troisième session, 35^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Monday 26 July 1993

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Lundi 26 juillet 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
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Monday 26 July 1993

Report continued from volume A.

1800

ONTARIO CASINO CORPORATION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LA SOCIÉTÉ
DES CASINOS DE L'ONTARIO

Ms Churley moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 8, An Act to provide for the control of casinos through the establishment of the Ontario Casino Corporation and to provide for certain other matters related to casinos / Loi prévoyant la réglementation des casinos par la création de la Société des casinos de l'Ontario et traitant de certaines autres questions relatives aux casinos.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the honourable minister have some opening remarks?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): Yes, thank you. I'm pleased to open the debate on second reading of Bill 8, the Ontario Casino Corporation Act, 1993. Since the announcement in the 1992 budget of the government's intention to proceed with this initiative, there has been a great deal of activity.

Shortly after the budget announcement, I established the Ontario casino project team. Members of the team include staff seconded from the business practices division of my ministry, the ministries of the Solicitor General, Attorney General, Culture, Tourism and Recreation, Finance, and the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and of course the team has important representation from the Ontario Provincial Police. This team has been assisted by consultants from internationally recognized and respected consulting firms, economists from McMaster University and the universities of Toronto and Windsor and other experts from the OPP and Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

My staff also had many productive meetings with those directly involved in the industry. They have met with both gaming and casino regulators from a number of other North American jurisdictions. They have also consulted extensively with casino operators themselves. We want a top-notch, competitive casino, and it made a great deal of sense for us to speak with those companies which are currently successful in this industry.

In addition, invaluable advice and assistance has been received from Mayor Michael Hurst, city council and staff and the police service of the city of Windsor.

Finally, and most importantly, I want to thank the many citizens of Windsor who attended consultation meetings, and people who wrote and telephoned me. Their advice and assistance have served to reinforce my belief that we made a good choice when we chose the

city of Windsor as the location for the casino.

The decision to establish a casino in Ontario represents a small part of this government's strategy for economic renewal. The initiative was taken in response to a growing number of requests by various groups and municipalities.

Every day many Ontarians travel outside Ontario's borders to enjoy the entertainment that casinos offer. The range of possible destinations continues to grow. This cross-border shopping for entertainment is costing Ontario millions of dollars and thousands of jobs annually.

I and staff of the casino project team have met with many representatives from business, labour, horse racing, charity, law enforcement and community groups. Their views contributed to our decision to approach expanded casino gaming in a careful, cautious and measured way.

Gaming is a well-established component of the entertainment industry, sanctioned in every Canadian province and territory and virtually all American states.

In Ontario, some \$4 billion is circulated each year from wagering on lotteries, horse racing and charitable games. A significant portion of this money is reinvested here in the form of salaries, consumer and government spending and support for charitable activity. Ontario charities earn more than \$1 billion each year from bingo alone, while the lion's share of provincial lottery revenues goes to hospitals.

Casinos are not a new idea in Canada. British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the Yukon already have year-round casino operations, and Quebec will soon join them. In Ontario and across the rest of Canada, Monte Carlo nights have long been enjoyed by many residents. A temporary casino at Toronto's Canadian National Exhibition last summer generated about \$800,000 for charity and attracted thousands of tourists to the fair.

We are confident that an Ontario casino will help stem the flow of Canadian dollars being spent in places like Las Vegas and Atlantic City, where nearly \$500 million Canadian was spent in 1991.

A recent federal tourism study reveals that one fifth of Canadian tourists visiting the United States for more than two days are there to gamble, and 50% of such travellers report that they would play at a casino closer to home if given the opportunity. This outflow of dollars, as I said, is costing Ontario thousands of jobs and lost revenue.

We appreciate that a casino will not magically solve the economic problems created by free trade, the GST, cross-border shopping, federal transfer payment cutbacks

and the recession. It is our view, however, and the view of many communities across Ontario, that casinos can enhance community economic development and generate government revenues to address pressing social needs. Bill 8 provides the strict regulatory regime necessary to ensure that this happens with honesty and integrity.

We chose Windsor for the province's first casino because it is the largest of Ontario's hard-hit border communities. It's also well positioned to attract American tourists to a year-round casino. The infusion of new dollars into the Windsor economy will help create new jobs and create economic growth, especially in the tourism and hospitality industries.

We are working very closely with Windsor and various community and business groups to ensure our overall planning reflects and respects community values. Full attention is being paid to the aspirations and concerns of Windsor residents.

The city of Windsor recommended that the casino gaming area be between 50,000 and 100,000 square feet—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: If the minister is going to abort party policy to such a degree, I think they should have a quorum to see this debacle.

The Acting Speaker: Will the clerk check if there is a quorum, please?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): Mr Speaker, a quorum is not present.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable minister may resume her participation in the debate on second reading of Bill 8.

1810

Hon Ms Churley: The maximum size of the casino's gaming area will be 75,000 square feet. While the market could easily sustain something much larger, the province wants to ensure that the casino will not overwhelm this community. The casino will be located on the city's preferred site. The restaurant and hotel facilities within the casino complex will be deliberately modest in order to maximize the benefits for the Windsor hospitality industry.

Since I announced on October 6 of last year that the casino would be located in Windsor, I have repeatedly stated in the media and in the casino project newsletter that the casino would pay for any necessary increases in the Windsor Police Service. The government has already devoted substantial resources to provide the highest level of security within the casino. We have a number of expert OPP staff assigned to the casino project, and they're working with local and national police forces and regulatory bodies, both within Canada and from other countries. They're involved with such issues as

casino design, internal surveillance systems, money handling, audit structure and background checks.

Recently, I met with Alvin Shpeen, who is the director of the division of gaming enforcement in New Jersey. I am pleased to report that the province has signed an information-sharing agreement with New Jersey whereby our two governments will fully share the information each jurisdiction has on those involved in the gaming industry. Obviously, New Jersey has a tremendous database on operators, suppliers and similar companies, and this agreement will save the OPP a lot of work and obviously save Ontario taxpayers a lot of money. My officials are in the process of making a similar arrangement with the state of Nevada. It is these sorts of arrangements that will assure Ontario residents of the highest level of safety and security in the Windsor casino.

Naturally, as with any large tourist attraction, there will be concerns for safety and security. We have forecast up to 12,000 daily visitors to the casino.

I am pleased to say the casino will provide funds to the city of Windsor for necessary increased police services. As a first step, we have already agreed to fund 10 new officers in Windsor for the opening of the interim casino. Casino project staff will continue to work with the Windsor Police Service to determine the number of additional staff beyond those first 10 who may be required. Windsor has a well-deserved reputation for being a safe city, and we will ensure it stays that way.

Last week, I had the pleasure of visiting Winnipeg, where there are now three casinos in operation. Their first casino, the Crystal Casino in the Fort Garry Hotel, has been in operation for a number of years. I'm pleased to say that I was informed that the casino has virtually no effect on the Winnipeg crime rate, and I'm confident that the same will be true of Windsor.

Our close consultation with the community includes productive and ongoing dialogue with the Windsor Raceway. We intend to market the casino in a manner that will complement rather than compete with other Windsor entertainment attractions, including the Windsor racetrack.

The horse racing industry is particularly concerned about the introduction of casinos in Ontario. This concern is understandable, but it must be viewed in the proper light. It is important to understand that horse racing competition is much more extensive than just other forms of gaming. All forms of entertainment compete with horse racing for the consumer's dollar. For example, the arrival of the Blue Jays in Toronto lured people away from the tracks, as have other entertainment forms.

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I believe there should be

a quorum to hear the honourable minister's policy statement on this bill.

The Acting Speaker: Could the Clerk check if there is a quorum present, please.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable minister can resume her participation in the debate.

Hon Ms Churley: Track attendance was even affected by the recent superb entertainment provided by the Maple Leafs in the playoffs.

However, it is important that members know that notwithstanding the significant diversification within the entertainment sector, horse racing still ranks first in attendance among Canadian spectator sports and a respectable second place in the national contest for gaming dollars. Ontario continues to boast the third-largest horse racing industry in North America.

Between 1991 and 1992, the total amount of dollars wagered on horse racing in Ontario declined by less than 1.5%. Although many other industries have faced worse hardship, this government has demonstrated a serious commitment to the viability of the horse racing industry with a number of specific measures.

As the minister responsible for the regulation of horse racing, I have worked very hard with the industry to encourage and help it to modernize its product and provide more opportunities for innovations such as offtrack betting.

It is important that all the players in the industry work cooperatively to respond to the challenges and opportunities before them. If we can all work together, I am confident the vibrancy of this industry can be maintained. If it is to survive in a healthy form, the horse racing industry must respond to the continually growing competition for the consumer's entertainment dollar.

This bill brings the 8,000 direct and indirect jobs the casino operation will create closer to reality for the people of Windsor. It also brings approximately \$140 million in increased revenues a step closer for all the people of Ontario.

We have consulted widely on this initiative. This bill reflects, in large measure, the concerns and suggestions of the groups and individuals with whom we have consulted.

The bill, when enacted, will establish a crown corporation to own the casino business and a Gaming Control Commission to regulate the casino and other forms of gaming. The regulation of wagering on horse racing will remain unchanged. I wish to draw the members' attention to the fact that the funding of the

Gaming Control Commission will not be paid for with tax dollars; it will be paid from casino revenues. All profits from the casino will accrue to the government, so all of the people of Ontario will benefit.

In conclusion, this bill creates a strict regulatory framework, based on the twin goals of honesty and integrity, which will allow the government to own a casino business and in so doing bring economic revitalization to the city of Windsor. At the same time, the casino will help to diversify the entertainment sector and attract even more tourists to Ontario.

I look forward to the debate on Bill 8 and the committee hearings which will follow. I urge all members to study the bill, listen to and join the debate and support, of course, Bill 8.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments on the minister's opening remarks?

1820

Mr Stockwell: It was with some interest that we spent some time listening to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations outlining her interest in casino gambling and this government's new-found interest in casino gambling.

It kind of frustrated me to hear this little preamble to the debate that's going to take place and not once did the minister ever revert back to party policy pre-1990. It was kind of curious, and I'd like comments on this.

They were always opposed to casino gambling. Let alone casino gambling, this government was always opposed to lotteries, for heaven's sake. Even their leader, Mr Bob Rae QC himself, had said that lotteries were simply a tax on the poor. Yet here we have a minister of the government, a social democratic government, standing up in this House extolling the virtues of legal public gambling.

They used to outline the horrors of the glass and concrete structures in Las Vegas. They used to turn up their noses at the Atlantic Citys of the world. They used to suggest that this is not what a fairminded, democratic country would do: institute gambling to prey on those poor individuals who can't control their public addiction.

Yet today we have a minister, in cold, stark contrast to those heady days of pious self-righteousness, standing before this House extolling not the virtues of the clean, honest, upfront living of the NDP but now of the money-grubbing industry they used to call gambling. It's a very, very interesting day—and I'd like to hear the minister's comment—when we stand here in July, hearing this minister of this government extolling the virtues of gambling.

Mr Wayne Lessard (Windsor-Walkerville): I take it from the comments of my friend across the floor that he was impressed with the minister's remarks, as I was as well.

The minister talked about some of the things this is going to mean for the city of Windsor: It's going to diversify its economy; it's going to revitalize the downtown in the city of Windsor; it's going to create jobs, the most important element of this opportunity; and it's going to attract tourists to an area that has been very hard hit by the ravages of the recession.

It's been affected tremendously by the introduction of the goods and services tax. At one time, we used to have a lot of tourists who came from the United States to shop in the city of Windsor, but the introduction of the goods and services tax really ended that, and we need to turn that around.

Something else that affected the city of Windsor's economy was the introduction of the free trade agreement. We've seen a number of plants close in our city, with a tremendous loss of jobs. We need something to bring jobs back to our city, and this provides that opportunity.

We also need to revitalize our downtown, which has seen a great number of stores closed and now boarded up as a result of federal Tory economic policies. We need people to come to shop in our stores. We need to see some stores open up.

I want to thank some of the people who have been important in bringing this initiative to fruition, people like the mayor of Windsor, Mike Hurst, and the members of city council; their vision in establishing the twin anchors concept with respect to revitalizing the downtown in the city of Windsor, with the casino on one side and the multiplex sports facility on the other side. That is going to provide a tremendous boost for the downtown and the development of the riverfront.

Mr Drainville: It's good to have this opportunity to respond to the remarks made by the honourable minister.

I would say to my honourable friend that I just wish we would stop hearing the public relations pitch that is being made: Let's all have fun in Ontario. Rather, let's hear about the problems we're going to have through casino gambling.

The honourable member has indicated that we're going to have a casino of 75,000 square feet. People may not know what that means, but it means in effect that we'll have a casino basically the same size as most in Atlantic City or in Las Vegas.

What we'll have is a casino which is basically going to bring more and more problems to the Windsor area. We hear about 10 new police officers who are being hired. We don't know the costs or how much money they've already put into looking at the difficulties with law enforcement, as they make this transition towards the casino.

We know, for instance, that there have been significant problems in the tunnel and the bridges in Windsor.

Last December, the customs officers sent a petition around indicating that they had had significantly more violent crimes, more people to deal with, more armed problems. These are the kinds of things that we're going to be bringing to Windsor à la NDP government.

I would say also about this initiative of the government that there is this attempt to sell it through consultation. What kind of consultation are we talking about? We're not talking about, "Do you, people of Windsor" or "Do you, people of Ontario, want to move into casino gambling?" Oh no, there was no consultation on that. There was no consultation with the caucus. There was little consultation with the cabinet. It was decided behind closed doors.

So when the minister talks about consultation, she's not talking about consultation on the principle but rather: "This is what we're going to do, whether you like it or not. Come on and tell us whether you like it. If you don't like it, we don't care anyway. We're going to set up the casino in Windsor. We don't care if there's more crime, we don't care if there are social problems and we don't care if Windsor is going to be a city that's a disaster afterward."

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): I rather enjoyed the speech that was made by the minister. Like everybody else in this House, when there's a new initiative or when there's going to be a significant shift in public policy, the introduction of something new like casinos, you're initially apprehensive, but after you take a much closer look at what's being proposed here and the way it's being proposed, it's going to be an isolated pilot project essentially intended to help the Windsor area economy, an economy which, as my friend from the Windsor area has outlined, has been ravaged by the recession and by a number of very significant federal government policies, Conservative government policies, like free trade, the GST, the interest rate and monetary policy. It has caused major, significant problems in a very local area of this province.

To simply say, "If you introduce this new policy initiative you're going to plunder this region, because it has to hire five or six or seven new police officers because there's going to be a significant rise in the ills of the area," to me seems a very fallacious argument. I invite the opposition and I invite all the people who essentially don't support gambling to Downsview where, I may add, we can walk into a number of casino-type gambling houses today that are unregulated and essentially remit no taxes.

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): It's all for charity. You stay out of there. Those are charities. You stay out of this, please, Anthony.

Mr Perruzza: You bring your money and then they take it from you. I assure you of that.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member's time has

expired. There is a limit of two minutes for questions and responses. The honourable minister has two minutes in response.

Mr Harnick: Unanimous consent for two more minutes.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent? No, we don't.

Hon Ms Churley: I listened, as I always do, carefully to my honourable friends across the floor, and I'm genuinely quite interested in hearing what the opposition has to say in response to my comments. I want them to know that I know there are different opinions about casino gambling and that I respect people's opinions if they don't share mine.

What I would like to do is to point out the myths and misunderstandings that are being told about casino gambling. Unfortunately, most people, when they think of casino gambling—the examples are raised constantly here in this House of Atlantic City and Las Vegas. Atlantic City has 12 casinos in a town of 35,000 people and, I think, 90,000 visitors a day. There is absolutely no comparison. It's unfortunate that this is the kind of reality people keep hearing about.

1830

We're talking about one casino as a pilot project in Ontario where we have really done our homework. We have consulted widely with the community. We really have. We have consulted widely with all of the police community, including the RCMP and the OPP and the Windsor police. We have consulted greatly with the industry, and what we are doing is making sure that up front we've put the kinds of regulations—

Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It's obvious again this minister is going to advocate their previously held position. We should have a quorum to hear this debacle.

Hon Ms Churley: I'm losing my time.

The Acting Speaker: Please, could you stop the clock. Is there a quorum?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is not present. Call in the members.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable minister can resume her response.

Hon Ms Churley: I think I was talking about the fact that people are making I think very unfair comparisons between what we're doing here in Windsor and Atlantic City. I think we should try to focus more on the kinds of things that we're doing here.

I would ask my honourable friends in the opposition to get their heads out of the sand. The world has changed around us drastically within the last little while.

Casinos are starting to be planned in most provinces all across the country and all over the United States, and certainly it's quite justifiable that in Ontario, when our tourism industry is hurting and our hospitality industry is hurting, we take a look at what we can do here in Ontario to keep those dollars from flowing out of Ontario. That is what we—

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. I understand the two minutes are up.

Mr Stockwell: Give her another chance, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent for the minister to continue? Agreed? No, I have some negative—we will continue with further debate.

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): I'll be taking some time to review a number of points with respect to Bill 8 with respect to the whole issue of casino gambling and how it will impact a variety of elements in our society.

But let me at the outset start, if you will, where the minister finished in her opening address this evening and her discussion on second reading of Bill 8. She concluded by saying that there were two goals with respect to this legislation, that it be done with honesty and integrity, and I want to start with those two points of view with reference to this government and the main players, the leadership of this particular government.

Eighteen years ago, the then MPP—

Mr Harnick: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don't believe we have a quorum present.

The Acting Speaker: Could the Clerk check for a quorum, please.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Brampton North can resume his participation in the debate.

Mr McClelland: As I said prior to the quorum call—I might parenthetically made a comment that it's very interesting that a number of New Democrats aren't here. Some weren't here for second reading as well, and I think we understand why they're not here. I'm sure we'll talk about their absence and how they feel about it, but I give credit to Mr Hansen as he leaves, the member for Lincoln, because I know how he feels about this deep in his heart. I know how he's opposed to it and how he's been under tremendous pressure to toe the party line on this one.

Mr Harnick: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don't believe we have a quorum present.

The Acting Speaker: Could the Clerk check if we have a quorum.

Mr Harnick: I know this is a matter these people must want to debate, gambling being near to the hearts of the NDP.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Brampton North can resume his participation in the debate.

Mr McClelland: I might say that I had a coach for a team I played with who always said I was a slow starter. It took me three or four shifts to get going, so maybe we need this time to warm up.

I was talking about the minister's closing comments when she referred to the two issues of honesty and integrity. Eighteen years ago in this place, actually somewhere right around the area where the now member for Scarborough North is taking good care of—

Mr Harnick: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: These people do not seem to understand the importance of having a quorum here. You call them back and then they leave as soon as they count the numbers. We're trying to have a debate here and there's not a quorum present. I appreciate how uncomfortable it is—

The Acting Speaker: Order. There's been a call for a quorum. Could the Clerk please check if there's a quorum.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Brampton North can resume his participation in the debate.

1840

Mr McClelland: I want to express my appreciation to the member for Kitchener-Wilmot, who leaves the moment I mention him.

I was referring to the comments made by the now Minister of Finance, who rose in this place 18 years ago. I know we'll hear that a lot has changed in 18 years. Indeed, a tremendous amount has changed. Let me tell you what he said 18 years ago:

"I would hope that the government does not get into the position of using lottery funds, gaming funds, to bail it out of fiscal deficits or for essential services. That truly would be offensive,"

So said Floyd Laughren on February 4, 1975.

What do we hear today in the opening comment? The minister says, "We're looking forward to the revenue this will generate, because it will provide the opportunity for us to provide services."

Another quote, this time about honesty and integrity: This is 1984, getting a little bit closer in terms of time frames here:

"Wherever casinos are found, they're inseparable from organized criminal activities. If a jurisdiction is not willing to accept this involvement, it should not get involved in legalized gaming."

That was in 1984, the now Minister of Natural Resources, the Honourable Howard Hampton.

Another quote regarding honesty and integrity:

"There are high rollers who are benefiting directly from the ripoff of the working people. They are gambling with your lives, they are gambling with your jobs and they are gambling with the future of your country. What is moral about a system that creates that kind of unemployment just because somebody gets greedy? What is moral about an economic system that feeds on greed?"

So said Bob Rae, who then went on to say, "If the NDP forms the next government, it will replace the casino economy with an economy that rewards enterprise—but not reward greed."

Bob Rae said in the latter part of 1986, "It's time that we presented the Canadian people with a vision of a democratic society that is far more compelling because it draws, not on what is most narrow in people but on what is most generous in people." That was Bob Rae in late 1986, talking about honesty and integrity.

The minister said in her opening comments, and I want to walk through a couple of these items point by point, that there has been a great deal of activity.

It's interesting the kind of activity that there has been. Certainly, there has been a great deal of activity in the ministry. There has been a team put together. Some very able people have been seconded to the team, and, given their mandate, I would say they have done a credible job for the most part. There have been some problems, as there always are and always will be in any undertaking. But those individuals have done their best to fulfil that mandate.

Let's talk about what their mandate was. The mandate that drove this great deal of activity the minister talks about in her ministry was "to get a casino built." It was not to examine or to do a rational study of the impact of casino gambling on a community or indeed the province. It was not to take a holistic view, a long-term view, and to collect some empirical data from which one could draw a variety of conclusions and act accordingly. It was rather to build a casino and to get that job done.

The minister will admit that since that point in time there has been a great deal of consultation. In fact, she made some reference to that, and we'll talk about that a little bit as well.

But the point is very clear, as I've said before, that the ship had already left harbour before it was decided which course would be charted. The decision was made to move ahead. Having made that decision and having

launched, if you will, on this voyage of what I call the Good Ship Casino, it was then decided that we would put together a crew and we'd chart out the course that we're going to follow. And yes, there has been a great deal of activity, sailing, if you will, through uncharted waters and trying to find where they're going and how they're going to arrive there, with the goal in mind of building a casino, at all costs, without regard to any of the consequences, but we will build a casino.

The minister talked about representations by a variety of groups and people she has brought together for the project. One of the things I would like to comment on is the absence of particular representation, and I'm referring to the absence of any representation from people from the Windsor area specifically.

There was a great deal of concern from the population of Windsor, from members of city council and leadership in the community who were proponents of a casino project, with respect to the absence of a particular representative from the Windsor community on the variety of groups that have been brought together, and particularly in terms of the casino project team.

The minister mentioned that she has had a variety of consultations. Some of them have been very anecdotal in their nature, just discussions with a variety of people. I presume, and I'm pretty sure, that many of them have been comprehensive, good, if you will, academically sound and empirically sound studies, some consultation that has been done. The question many of us have—

Mr Stockwell: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: A quorum call, please.

The Acting Speaker: Could the Clerk check if we have a quorum, please.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Brampton North can resume his participation in the debate.

Mr McClelland: I was talking about consultation and meetings. The minister speaks quite proudly about her extensive consultations and the variety of meetings she's had, meetings with particular interest groups, meetings with representatives of the casino industry, police bodies, people from various ministries.

Where are the findings, Minister? Where are the findings from the variety of meetings and from the studies you have commissioned that chart the course you're undertaking right now? The cart before the horse, Minister, all over again. You started out on your path, and now you're coming back and saying: "We're going to do the consultation. We're going to do the study."

I say to my friends opposite, many of whom have some grave concerns about this legislation from a philosophical point of view, from the particular points

of the legislation, from the particular definition of the scope of this project and the impact it may have, that you know very well that essentially the die is cast.

You know the process we are going to undertake in the next number of weeks when we go on committee hearings. I'm told it may be as much as three weeks of public consultation around the province of Ontario, doubtless some of that time in Windsor, doubtless some of that time in other areas where casinos will inevitably be located should this government have its way. We know that notwithstanding whatever is said, whatever information is brought forward, whatever objections people raise, indeed whatever affirmation people bring to the legislation, the die has been cast and the minister will proceed essentially as set out in the bill.

We've all been through that. It's been a frustration of many of us. It was a frustration in years past, and it will continue to be, I suppose, until we have some very fundamental reform in terms of how we do business around this place.

At least one of my friends opposite who is present this evening is very concerned about this legislation and has been described by colleagues in his caucus as being livid about what the government is doing. I say to him, as he sits here and considers this tonight and over the next number of weeks, bear in mind that all of the objections you are going to hear and all of the concerns that you hold deep in your heart about this are meaningless when all is said and done, because the minister has made a commitment; her political career is very much tied in to the success of this particular legislation.

I might add that we know really who's driving this. We know that the Minister of Education and Training, the member for Windsor-Riverside, has taken a significant leadership role in not only the genesis of this legislation but certainly the work to date in terms of what's taking place as we move towards the government's agenda on Bill 8.

1850

Interjection.

Mr McClelland: Well, we'll hear some consultation in three weeks, and as we said in the past, the proof will be in the pudding, when we wait and see what kind of impact that consultation has.

I am willing to stand here tonight, no pun intended, and bet dollars to doughnuts that you are not going to make any substantive changes to the legislation, Minister. Regardless of what is said by the people in communities across the province, regardless of the expertise that is brought before the committee, you have essentially made up your mind. I suppose in one sense I even feel in a sort of perverse way that it would be better if you would just ram it ahead, because that's what you're going to do anyway.

I know the history of your government. I know how

you very much, as a collective body, don't like legitimate public debate. That's been very evident in terms of the rule changes. There are some people in your own caucus who feel very, very unhappy about that, they're very uncomfortable about the way you've dealt with that very issue: the way this place works. We understand that you're not happy about some of the dissension out there, but it's going to have little or no impact in the final analysis.

Minister, another point you made—and I don't have the benefit of a copy of your comments this evening in front of me, but I did try to make reasonably succinct bullet points as you went through it. You talked about prior successes in the industry being the models upon which you were going to draw. The question I have to ask you is this, and I hope we hear this over the course of the hearings that will follow and perhaps in this place in response if you choose to use the two minutes: How do you measure success?

Are you measuring success simply in bottom line? Are you looking at people like the Trumps of the world—and we'll talk about some of the things he has to say about the legislation and its impact on communities—who make a buck; make, if truth be known, millions of dollars in the industry? Is that your measure of success? Is your measure of success providing a type of job, a job category, to a community and saying to that community: "This is our economic strategy for your community?" Is that your measure of success? Will it be the number of person-hours of employment, whether it be part-time, full-time, unionized, non-unionized? How are you going to measure success? What is the quality of measurement that you're going to bring to bear on that?

I thought that perhaps the most telling point in your comments this evening was that you mentioned the rationale for Bill 8. You said, if I heard you correctly, the rationale for this particular legislation was that you wanted to have economic renewal for the city of Windsor. I have to ask that question again: Is the substance of your economic strategy for the city of Windsor, for southwestern Ontario, based on the gaming industry, based on casinos? You said in your comments that economic renewal was the issue that drove this legislation for locating in Windsor. I would say to the people of Windsor that if that is the basis, the foundation, the cornerstone of the economic strategy of this government, then they should have some grave concerns; they had better be very, very concerned if that is the direction the government wants to go.

Mr Drainville: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don't believe there's a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have a quorum?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Brampton North may resume his participation in the debate.

Mr McClelland: During the interlude, the minister spoke across the great gulf that divides us here and indicated I didn't quite hear everything she said. She said this was but a small part of the economic renewal. I think a lot of people in Windsor are wondering: Is this the substitution for the long-term government jobs they were expecting, for the Ministry of Labour jobs that had the plug pulled? Is it substitution for dealing with a diversification of the economy of Windsor, moving away from dependence on the auto industry and giving a broader-based economic mix to the Windsor area?

Minister, I come back to that. I think it was very, very telling that you made such a point of saying this was driven essentially by a need for economic renewal.

Another point as you worked through your comments this evening is that you said you met with the horse racing industry. Indeed, you have met with them, but I say to you in all candour that they will dispute without qualification that you heard anything of substance they had to say. Every representative of the industry with whom I have spoken has said to me that, yes, they had an opportunity to meet with you, they met with your representatives, but they don't for a moment think you heard anything they said.

The absence of hearing anything substantive about what you're going to do to address their concerns speaks volumes. Your silence effectively condemns you in terms of that consultative process with the horse racing industry. They have said to me, and if they were here tonight, they would say it to you, that you have not met with them or consulted with them in any significant fashion. We'll be talking about that, no doubt, over the weeks ahead and perhaps in the remaining time we have here this evening.

You talked about casinos at the CNE. I thought the member from Etobicoke was going to have to be tied down there for a minute and we would have to hold him back. Minister, you know about the casinos at the CNE. You talked about that as a model you wanted to draw upon, knowing full well that that comparison is miles apart from the type of project that is envisaged in Windsor. Then later on, in response to some of the members opposite, you said, "Well, you're making unfair comparisons." You can't have it both ways.

You talked about the CNE, and I know what your record was on the CNE, just prior to an election in 1990. I remember what you said then. You said at that time that there was no way you could in good conscience support a casino at the CNE. You were worried about the type of impact it would have on what was essentially a family outing.

Mr Harnick: Marilyn didn't say that, did she? Did she vote for it or against it?

Mr McClelland: My friend from Willowdale asks me a very pertinent question. My friend from Willowdale says, in the final analysis, when the minister was sitting, as she was then, on city council, how did she vote when push came to shove in terms of a casino at the CNE? Guess what, Minister? In case you've forgotten, you voted against it because of your grave concerns. What's happened to those concerns? Is a cabinet seat too important to you?

Mr Drainville: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I think the members of the government should hear this important point that's being raised by the member for Brampton North.

The Acting Speaker: That is not a point of order.

Mr Drainville: There is no quorum.

The Acting Speaker: Are you calling for a quorum?

Mr Drainville: I am calling for a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: Sorry. Is there a quorum?

Acting Table Clerk (Mr Franco Carrozza): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Brampton North may resume his participation in the debate on Bill 8.

Mr McClelland: I talked a little bit about the CNE and the remarkable conversion on the road to cabinet that the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations had.

Mr Harnick: Anything to get into the cabinet.

Mr McClelland: Well, only she can comment on that.

I think there will be a lot of NDP supporters, people who were with the minister in her political life for many years, who are really questioning and wondering what happened, as indeed will people be wondering about what happened to the member for Nickel Belt, who stood in this place and made the comments he did, or the member for Rainy River, or the member for York South, the Premier, and the change of heart that he has had over the past number of years. Then again, it's getting very customary around this place to hear the Premier say, "Well, that was then and this is now."

That becomes the rationale for a change of heart, a change of direction, a change of policy and, dare I say it, a change of principles. I suppose therein lies the real rub with my friends opposite, those who can't support it, a goodly number of them, who are struggling with it in the NDP caucus.

1900

I think back to a piece I saw on one of the networks this evening where the left-leaning Diane Francis and the centrist Clayton Ruby were talking about why the

NDP was in such despair and was dropping like a stone in terms of the polls and was at 18%. My goodness, even since then they've fallen another 5% today, down to 13%. Goodness knows where they'll be tomorrow.

Do you know what Clayton Ruby said in that piece on TV? He said it was because they had abandoned their principle, that it didn't really have a lot to do with economic policy. Sure, that's going to impact some people, but those people were never really NDP supporters. What happened was that the core NDP vote is vanishing because this used to be—operative phrase, "used to be"—a party of principle, principles enunciated by people like the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations but a couple of years ago, who had grave concerns about the impact of a casino at the CNE, and sat in her place at city council and voted against it, but as I said, has had this remarkable conversion.

Minister, during your comments you also talked about charities and about how wonderful gaming had been for charities over the past couple of years, particularly with the new legislation that you brought into effect, Bill 26. I want to make a comment or two about the regulations that you announced today, because that has some impact on casino legislation as well.

The minister said she was delighted that charities were being the beneficiaries of casinos all around the province. The member for Downsview said that you can come and have a casino any day, any time in his riding. I guess the question is, what's going to happen to those charities? What will be the impact on the charities, particularly in the Windsor area?

Now, the minister has an answer for that. The minister says: "Trust me, we'll take care of you. We're going to consult with you. Don't worry. We'll deal with this as it evolves. This is a pilot project, so we're going to have to work this one through and iron out the wrinkles as they develop, deal with this problem over here, deal with the racing industry problem over there. Charities, I know you've got some real concerns, but trust us, we'll take care of you. We'll deal with it."

I come back to what I said earlier, Minister. The problem is that you said to the good people you have brought together on your team, competent, able people, "Build that casino." You didn't say to them, "Go out and get the information together; plan on how your going to do it; what will be the impact on charities; have a contingency plan for them," but rather: "Go out and build that casino and address those problems as they evolve, if you can address them. If you can't address them, trust us; we'll take care of you," says the minister. Cold comfort, I might add, for those people in Windsor who run charities, who have been contributing to the fabric of that community, indeed to the social fabric of communities all across this province for so many years.

The member for Bruce asked you a question today,

Minister, and it was very well put, I think. He referred to the roving casinos that are operating and allow virtually seven-day-a-week access throughout the Hamilton-Wentworth region. We heard tonight from the minister—the member for Downsview. God forbid, I almost said “the minister from Downsview,” but you never know. I mean, anything can happen in Bob Rae’s Ontario. But you can be in a casino any night in Downsview as well.

The minister’s answer was, “We’re not too worried about it, because it will take care of itself.” I looked at that answer and I tried to reread it. The member for Bruce came back and said: “That’s exactly the problem, Minister. It’s generating revenues. We’re concerned about the impact the casino legislation or the eight permanent casinos, the type that you envisage in Windsor, will have, because we know full well it’s not one. We know that this is but the thin edge of the wedge and there will be more, given the agenda of this government.” The minister’s response was: “Well, you know, we’re going to generate more money and it’s going to go into general revenues and we’re going to address social problems.”

Minister, have you ever thought of the impact, dollar for dollar, of pulling money out of charities, the impact that’s going to have on the economy? I can’t break it down precisely for Ontario, but I can tell you that the volunteer sector across this country contributes a net value of some—I want you to hear this—\$328 billion of net worth to the social services in value in kind through the volunteer sector across this country. I’m sorry. I said \$328 billion; it’s \$32.8 billion. I saw you looking at me with a little quizzical look, Speaker, and rightly so. I want to correct the record. Indeed, that’s still a huge, huge amount of money: \$32.8 billion contributed to our economy by the volunteer network across this country.

I can only presume that inasmuch as we have close to half of the population—we must be somewhere in the 33% to 50% range—even at a conservative estimate that would be over \$10 billion a year contributed in the province of Ontario by volunteer agencies. Many of those agencies and organizations depend on gaming, as we know it now, to raise funds. Those moneys are multiplied, not added, into the economy. You and I, Speaker, and other members opposite have said on many occasions, when we pay tribute to the value of the volunteer network, how they multiply their resources in and throughout the community.

The minister’s response to the question put to her by the member for Bruce or the opposition House leader today was: “It’s okay. It’s a good business because it generates lots of money.” The member said: “That’s exactly the point. It generates a lot of money right now for charities and we’re concerned about the impact it will have.” Indeed, there’s a coalition, as you know, that’s been formed. It represents some 30-odd charities

in the province of Ontario that have some grave concerns. We’re going to talk about those in due course.

What else did she say in her opening comments? She said that she was looking at a list of revenues and that there was going to be a tremendous net benefit to the economy. But I have to ask the questions: What cost is there going to be? What will be the cost to the city of Windsor? What will be the cost in terms of social services across the province, the impact that it might have? Has any study been done? Has there been a review of the literature and the data that suggest there will be a significant cost? What is that cost?

The minister has failed to address that. She talked, again I say, of consultation and the fact that she has had studies done. The people of Ontario and the members in this place want to know, where are those studies? Show us the data. Show us the planning. Let us know what it is we’re dealing with. I’ll tell you, in all sincerity, that there are a lot of people who are very concerned about the ultimate cost-benefit of the casino, not only in Windsor but across the province. Doubtless there will be revenues raised. You’d have to be living in some kind of dream world if you didn’t think that a casino was going to generate revenues. The question is, at what cost? What is the cost going to be?

Minister, I say to you in sincerity that you haven’t even begun to address that. You haven’t provided us on this side of the House, and I doubt your own caucus colleagues, or the people of Ontario generally, with anything that indicates any handles you have in terms of the impact on social services and the needs that are going to arise as a direct result of the casino in Windsor, and as we know, ultimately elsewhere in the province.

You closed with honesty and integrity and talked about that. We’ve already talked about that a little bit. No doubt that’s going to come up frequently. Minister, you mentioned that the project team had chosen Windsor in large measure because of its location. It’s situated within a couple of hours’ drive of a large population. Obviously, you’re looking at the Detroit market and down through the Ohio River valley, that industrialized part of the northern United States, wanting to impact that.

Let’s get a little bit of a dose of reality right here. Do you honestly think that the city of Detroit and the legislators in Michigan are going to stand by idly while Windsor builds a casino? You know what? All the data say that if you want an economic benefit, you’re going to get an economic benefit as long as it’s not the citizens of your own jurisdiction who are spending the money, because if it’s the people in your own jurisdiction spending the money, it’s ultimately going to end up costing you a lot more.

1910

You’re going to hear that time and time again

through committee over the next few weeks. You've said yourself that you're hoping that 80% of the clientele of the casino will be drawn from the United States. Well, if you think Detroit is going to sit back and let it happen without responding, it's time to wake up and get into the real world. You laugh and you sit there and smile, but you know full well that there are negotiations under way currently with a native group looking to locate in Greektown, looking to use that as a vehicle, notwithstanding the two votes that have been held in Detroit. You know there are ways they're going to do that.

You know what's really interesting? Very prominent people in the Governor's office, people who were involved in his transition team, are now working on—guess what?—a casino project. Sound familiar, Minister? Guess what their mandate is going to be. Their mandate is going to be to get a casino built, very much like the mandate you gave your team. And the day you put the shovel in the ground or this legislation passes, I'm willing to virtually guarantee you that you'll see a Michigan project under way through a variety of different mechanisms.

We know there have been two votes in Michigan, in Detroit, and they've both been defeated. We know things have a way of changing. Look at what's happened over there, people changing their minds on that one. I'm willing to bet almost anything—again, no pun intended—that you're going to see a change in the vote at Detroit, perhaps with the state legislators in Michigan or some other mechanism, and that would be the vehicle of using aboriginal peoples to establish a gaming house, a casino, in the city of Detroit. If that happens, the deck of cards begins to come down in terms of the economic viability.

I regret I can't remember the gentleman's name, but, Speaker, you hosted a function with a number of legislators who spoke, of all topics, on transportation issues. There was a gentleman—my friend from Lincoln may remember his name—a legislator from Pennsylvania, a very gregarious gentleman, who said to us, as we talked about Bill 8 and its impact, "You guys are asking for trouble with a capital T." I don't know if you remember the man: a short, very roly-poly kind of gregarious black gentleman who was a legislator from Pennsylvania. He said, "One worked for a while, two were problematic, and now that we have three it's an absolute disaster." I don't know if you recall that discussion. I'm not sure if my friend from Lincoln remembers that, sitting around chatting with him.

Minister, think about that. Your market is the Detroit area. Essentially, what you want is to draw Americans in, and if you think they're going to sit idly by, you're absolutely dreaming. Wake up, Minister. You've got a real problem on your hands in terms of the market you want to draw on.

I'm almost certain that if they decide to go ahead with the project, they will do it in a fashion that will have your head spinning. They will have that thing up and running in record time that will make you wonder why it took us so long to get it going, and they'll be competing directly for the population you want to draw. You think they're going to sit by and accept us saying: "It's okay. We're not going to have any food in the casino and we're not going to have any alcohol served at the tables because we want to make sure we keep a nice, pristine operation"?

Minister, you're going to have competition on your hands, and you're going to be competing with the big leagues. You had better understand and you had better know full well that the economic carrot you're holding out to the people of Windsor may be very much illusory and the bubble may burst. They will come back to you and they will come back to the member for Windsor-Riverside and backbench colleagues who are here supporting it and hold them accountable for the decision you made when you held out that illusory carrot of economic benefit for the city of Windsor. You know full well that if Detroit goes ahead with the project, or Michigan near Detroit, whether it be in one of the satellite communities around Detroit or in Detroit itself in Greektown, the Windsor project will be in serious economic trouble. I challenge you to show us some data, show us some marketing analysis and some surveys that would indicate that you have that problem well in hand.

You are contemplating moving to other parts of Ontario—and we know you have begun to do studies, or have already done them; I presume they're already done and that they've been given to you and have perhaps been brought to cabinet. That I don't know. You have indicated other potential locations in the province; doubtless, one of those will be in the Niagara Peninsula.

My friend the member for Lincoln will have significant interest, and the member for St Catharines-Brock, who's here this evening, will also have great interest when we find out that that's a preferred site, because we know—I just want to doublecheck here and make sure my number's right—that 120,000 video lottery terminals have been purchased by the state of New York. Guess where they're going to go? They're going to go right along the Ontario border, because the state of New York will not sit by and allow those moneys to migrate into Ontario. You've got to be absolutely naïve and living in la-la land if you believe that our friends to the south in Michigan and New York are just going to sit by and let it happen.

The target you're talking about, the population market you're talking about to make this economically viable will be short-lived at best, and it may not even survive getting the key turned in the full-time casino. Minister,

I'm going to challenge you, put you on notice now, day after day, as we go through committees, to show us the economic numbers and the marketing surveys that show you can withstand that kind of competition and make it viable for the city of Windsor and indeed for the province of Ontario.

The tourism and hospitality industry in Windsor, according to the minister, will be almost incapable of handling the windfall. It's going to be milk and honey falling from heaven on the people of Windsor by way of the Ambassador Bridge and the tunnel.

Minister, let's look at what happens when people gamble.

You said that you've designed the casino, and you're putting it upon the people who are in the request for proposal to show us how they're going to ensure the viability of the local economy. Mr Speaker, you will know that part of the plan as envisioned by the minister and the casino team—which I think is very honourable; I given them credit for thinking about this—is that they want to design a casino that will have limitations in terms of the seats available for the hospitality industry, ie, restaurants, and which will not provide alcoholic beverages on the floor in order to induce people to go out into the surrounding community.

My friend, a restaurateur, Kirk Dyck, and others in Windsor are delighted with the prospect of having these 12,000 tourists coming in and spending money and eating and drinking and spending hundreds of dollars on a daily basis in their establishments.

You know what happens in Atlantic City? The data show us that everybody who comes in to gamble in Atlantic City spends an average of six hours, and five hours and 40 minutes is spent at the tables or at the slot machines.

The minister will say, "Well, that's different, because they get drinks there and they can pick up munchies and they're going to be there." Interestingly enough, I confess, I've been to a casino. You said you've never been. People who are there are not concerned about getting their drinks; they're there to gamble. Those people who are coming and going specifically for that reason, you know what they're going to do? They're going to spend their time and their money gambling.

You tell us that the benefit will be—and I can't believe this—\$325 million of secondary economic spinoff to the city of Windsor. Are you serious? Are you real? These people who come in are going to spend \$325 million? I want to see the numbers on that, Minister. I'm going to ask you for that, and people are going to be asking you for that in Windsor as well.

The data show us very plainly and very clearly that when somebody comes to gamble he spends an average of six hours in the host community, using Atlantic City as a model, and he spends five hours and 40 minutes at

the tables, at the games; 20 minutes is attributed to travel and secondary economic spinoff, 20 minutes travel in going around the corner to pick up something to eat or going to the local bar.

I'm very, very sceptical about the \$325 million, but I look forward to having you have the opportunity, throughout committee, to present the numbers and the data that would support that. I think you're, quite frankly, selling the people of Windsor a pack of goods, and we'll talk a little bit about some of the local editorials and the people around Windsor who have begun to see through what they've been told.

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Well, how about community values? What are the community values of Windsor? How about the people who have been opposed? How about the citizen groups that have said they want to meet with you, want to talk with you? Your basic line to them has been: "Look, if you're opposed to this, there's no point hearing you. We've already made up our mind." As the member for Victoria-Haliburton said: "We ain't going to listen if you don't agree with us. That's our definition of consultation."

Minister, when you talk about community values, don't perpetuate the myth that you're concerned about the values of the people of Windsor, because what you're concerned about is the values of people who agree with you. If they disagree, you don't want to hear from them. They're going to be there; you're going to have a lot of people. I trust the committee will go to Windsor: It makes sense that the finance committee, in its deliberations, would go to the host community; we may indeed spend a couple of days there.

Mr Harnick: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don't believe we have a quorum present.

Acting Table Clerk: A quorum is not present.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The honourable member for Brampton North may resume his remarks.

Mr McClelland: I was talking about the restaurant industry. Let me just tell you that the Ontario Restaurant Association has some real significant concerns, Minister. We're going to be inviting them to committee, and I hope you would invite them as well.

When we go to Windsor, I know we're going to hear from a lot of people who are supportive of the legislation, but I'm going to ask the minister—she's an honourable woman; I respect her as an individual—that she would listen, I hope honestly and carefully, to the people who are opposed to this, because the minister made reference to community values. Community values, as we in this business all know, are diverse, and sometimes people disagree with us. I think it's important that we hear them; not just listen to them, but actually hear them.

I challenge you as a colleague to give them your hearing and to listen very carefully to the concerns they have, because your staff—and I understand how that happens: You're busy, you've got a full schedule, and they haven't felt they've really had an opportunity to present their concerns to you. So when we go there, please listen to them, hear their concerns.

I say that to my friends opposite as well, those of you who will be serving on that committee, those of you who have some misgivings, who had them in the past and continue to have them. We know the pressures that are being brought to bear on you to toe the party line on this one. We know the pressure that's being brought, particularly by the member for Windsor-Riverside; he has a tremendous political interest in this. That's fine, that's part and parcel of fulfilling his responsibilities, but as you feel that pressure, listen as well to the people of that community and indeed people from all across the province.

I made reference to the Ontario Restaurant Association. They will certainly want to be talking to you and letting you know about their concerns with respect to the size of the restaurant, the setting of alcohol prices. You know all about these, but I just want to get them on the record and assure my friends in the association that we'll be going into these in considerable detail. Also, there will be some reference to the hotel development, how we're going to measure the threshold that's set out in the legislation on the 75% occupancy.

The minister spoke as well about the police service and that the government will cover the gap. That's really interesting, because I want to refer to an article that appears in last Wednesday's Windsor Star. The headline says, "Gap Still Wide on Casino-Related Policing Needs." The article reads, in part, as follows, "The numbers game between the Windsor Police Services and the Ontario government continued Tuesday." That would have been Tuesday, July 20. "At stake is adequate protection for Windsor against casino-related crime."

This is not talking about a stop sign at an intersection. This is not talking about trivial matters. It's talking about some very significant concerns that the police services board has, and the headline says that the gap is wide. I won't go into a great deal of detail, but Chief Adkin met with the project team manager and expressed his grave concerns about the inadequacy of the commitment of the government to cover policing.

We know, and the minister has said, that they have offered 10 police officers on an interim basis, and certainly the OPP have been doing the security checks and so forth. But I say to you that the gap is indeed wide. The chief has spoken in terms of 30 or 30-plus officers. At the present time, the government of Ontario, the New Democrats, have said they will take care of 15.

The police chief says there are 15 different branches

of the police that, and I quote the chief, "need support to give Windsor residents the kind of safety they've come to expect." I'm sure the members from Windsor will do everything they can, given the folly of the government to proceed with this without due regard to the safety—and I say that in all sincerity, Minister. These people are concerned about the safety of the residents. I'm going to read it to you; I know you had to step out for a minute and perhaps consult with your staff.

What's at stake? Here's what's at stake, and I reiterate it: "At stake is adequate protection for Windsor against casino-related crime." When the member for St Catharines asked you a question a week or so ago, you laughed it off. You said: "Don't worry about it. We're going to take care of it. Trust us. Our security measures"—

Hon Ms Churley: I did not.

Mr McClelland: You didn't laugh it off. Let's be fair: You didn't laugh it off in a glib sense, but you said his concerns really weren't all that valid, weren't that well founded. "Don't worry," effectively is what you said. I can pull it from Hansard, if you like; I have it here. You said: "Trust us. We're going to take care of it. We've got the OPP working on it. We're going to provide police officers," and somehow that's going to ensure there's no crime.

I don't know how many of my friends here have spent time in the north; maybe some of you have cottages or whatever. Occasionally, when you're in the north—and I digress for a moment, Speaker; bear with me. I had the pleasure of spending six summers as a canoe tripper and guide. From time to time you'd run across orphaned raccoon kittens. Minister, I want you to hear this. This is important. It's a cute little illustration. You know how we tell stories to make a point from time to time? This one you've got to hear.

Little raccoon kittens are cute, they're cuddly. This has happened to a lot of people; you'll read stories about this. Mr Ramsay, I'm sure, can tell you all kinds of incidents. Kids get these cute little raccoon kittens and they want to raise them as pets. You know what? People say, "It won't happen to me." There has never been a raccoon that has been raised by a human being that at some point in its life hasn't turned on the human and attacked without provocation. You know why? Because it's the nature of the beast. It can't help it. There's nothing terrible about it; it's just the way the animal is made. You live with them and you raise them, and I've seen it happen. I've seen young people get these little kittens and insist that theirs will be different. They name them like puppies and like kittens, and they bottle-feed them and they nurture them. And at some point in time—

I read this spring—maybe Mr Ramsay could help me with this; I forget the location in northern Ontario—that

a young lady who had raised a kitten that she found last summer was severely mauled and required extensive plastic surgery. You know why? Because it's in their nature. They never change. Do you know what every young person who raises a little raccoon kitten says? "It won't happen to me. Mine will be different."

You, Minister, say time and again to the member for Bruce, to the member for St Catharines in his questions, to the member from Haliburton, to myself, to the member for Parry Sound: "We will be different. It's not going to happen here. We're going to change the way it's always happened in the past." You'll leave here nodding your head with the assertion in your own mind that somehow, somehow, the nature of the beast will be different for you.

I say to my friends in government that it's not going to be any different this time. No matter how you try to package the product, no matter what kind of pre-consultation you do, you can't change what's going to happen in terms of the attraction, the magnet, of a casino to organized crime. We know that's going to happen.

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The Windsor Star had a really interesting commentary on Saturday, April 24. It was under the authorship of Ms Karen Hall, who is a Windsor Star editorial writer. She comes out with some great lines in here. One of them is, I think, of some interest when we talk about what's going on here. Let me read her comment:

"There will be complaints once a casino is established in Windsor, even though it might bring 425 new provincial jobs to the city, because there are going to be some serious problems that we haven't been told about and that I'm only beginning to understand. The casino game plan has changed so many times and become so estranged from what Windsor wanted that I personally cringe at my early support for the project."

There are more and more people in Windsor in positions of leadership who are beginning to say the same thing, because as they begin to understand the potential impact of a casino on their community, they too are cringing at their early support. I think you're going to hear that in spades as we proceed with the committee on this one.

The minister says she's delighted because she signed an agreement on information with New Jersey. She's negotiating an information linkage, package-sharing, with Nevada. Believe me, the Canadian Police Information Centre is going to be really busy too. You know that, I know that, and we'll wait and see whether she closes the gap with the policing needs and tries to change the nature of the beast.

I think the minister is being entirely naïve if she feels that she will somehow ensure that the Windsor project will not be fraught with the same difficulties with respect to organized crime, and the attraction of crimi-

nal elements and some of the more unsavoury elements that have been experienced in virtually every community.

She made reference to Winnipeg and she says at the same time that we draw unfair comparisons. I say to her, if she's listening—I'm sure she'll read the transcript—you cannot draw a comparison with the type of project you envisage in Windsor and the Winnipeg project. That's an apples and oranges comparison. You know it, I know it, and every thinking member in this place knows it. That's all 130 of us, because we all take our jobs seriously. I'm sure every member does. They're going to think that one through and they're going to know that you're dreaming if you're going to tell the people of Windsor that there's going to be no significant increase in crime.

I heard a new one tonight. I heard that it's the Blue Jays fault. It's Robbie Alomar's and John Olerud's fault, and Pat Gillick and company, that the horse racing industry is in decline. It's the Blue Jays to blame. I'm sure the Blue Jays management is going to be upset to hear that, because tonight for the first time I heard it here, right here on this station, this channel, that the Blue Jays are responsible for the decline in the horse racing industry and any problems that are visited upon the horse racing industry.

Speaker, you weren't in the chair at the time; it was our good friend from Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry and God knows wherever, in God's country down in eastern Ontario, who was in the chair. But the minister stood in her place earlier and said that the horse racing industry was really adversely affected by the Blue Jays. I'm sure Pat Gillick and company are going to feel terrible and maybe they can take some of that \$45-million salary cap and help offset, because I'm sure they're people of good conscience. I say that facetiously.

Minister, come on, let's get real. There are some real concerns that the horse racing industry has. Don't brush it off. I made some comments earlier that the people in the horse racing industry, could they stand in this place this evening and make a comment, would say, "Minister, you might have listened to us but you didn't hear anything we had to say." They have some grave concerns, and we're going to talk about that as well.

The Gaming Control Commission is going to save us harmless from all these difficulties, and I wish it well. We know that they're reasonable, they're intelligent and quite impressive if you look at their background, the individuals who have been named to serve on that commission. There's no way that they're going to be able to close the door and keep organized crime out of what's going to happen in Windsor.

The minister made mention of the impact of the casino on the charitable gaming industry, and today I just want to make some sort of tangential reference to

the new policies that were announced, one in particular. She thinks that by coming down with tight regulations, closely monitoring Monte Carlo nights and licences, the charity Monte Carlos are going to be protected from the impact of casino legislation. One of the things that she said was that she is going to limit new or inexperienced charities to operate a maximum of 10 games in any event. I just want to take this opportunity to say that you're going after the wrong target here.

The target is not the charities; the target is the operators, and they have proliferated at a great rate. Some of those who have been running legitimate and very controlled operations for charities in the past are finding that they have some—and I say this advisedly—fly-by-night operators who are coming in and have some, and I say this on very good authority, very questionable practices.

It's not the charities that need to be monitored, licensed and looked at for the appropriate enforcement; it's the operators of the Monte Carlo nights, and I would urge the minister to deal with that.

We have, as well, in the province of Ontario an organization that has grown up called the Ontario Charitable Gaming Coalition. That coalition, Mr Speaker, as you may know, represents a goodly number of charitable organizations throughout the province. They have some real, great concerns. We talked about that.

I want to tell you that those people have said they are desperately concerned about the viability of their operation and the organizations they represent as a result of the government's decision to proceed with the casino legislation. As well, they're saying, now that they have had an opportunity to make their submissions, that they haven't had any real sense of satisfaction, that they don't really think their message is being heard, that they would hope the government would respond in a more substantive way to the concerns they have raised.

They also make a point, and I think it sums it up very well and I want to read from their submission, their material:

"Members of the Ontario Charitable Gaming Coalition are deeply disappointed and anxious about the future reductions in our services because of reduced revenues. We, therefore, ask the minister to reconsider her decision to exclude Ontario charities from the operation of Ontario casinos."

I know that the die has been cast and we're going ahead with requests for proposals and the model that's been set up by the minister, but implicit and fundamental to the concerns raised by the coalition is the fact that it has some grave concerns about the economic impact on charities.

We talked a bit earlier about what contribution charities make. I would hope the minister would hear

their concerns, and I will not at the present time go through all of them.

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): Good.

Mr McClelland: The member says good. Maybe if we have time, I say to my friend from Essex, we will go through them. Let me tell you why it's maybe not a good idea that I bypass them. Their concerns are legitimate. They're succinct. They have six essential points, I say to my friend from Essex who says it's good that I'm not going to go over them.

Mr Hayes: Essex-Kent.

Mr McClelland: Essex-Kent, thank you. Mr Hayes, the member for Essex-Kent, reminds me that the good people of Kent want to make sure their member is appropriately identified, given the good representation he is attempting to give them, no doubt.

The point is this, I say to my friend, that they raised six very succinct, legitimate concerns about the impact of the casino on the charitable network across this province. We have had questions raised in this House, and again I say the minister's responses have been shallow, they've been superficial and inadequate, and the people who run the charities are very significantly concerned.

I mentioned that Ms Hall in one of her columns in the Windsor Star not too long ago said that she regrets she had at one point endorsed the casino project. She bought the bill of goods that it was going to be an economic boon and provide all kinds of revenue and employment opportunities.

If I didn't know any better, I'd think they were trying to get me to line up the water so I'll have to quit early.

She says she cringes that she once supported the legislation.

I quote from a column entitled "Business." My friends Mr Lessard, Mr Hayes and others from the area will recognize the publication. It's Windsor's business publication, entitled *In Business in Windsor*. The editor of this particular publication, Mr Halberstadt, makes some very interesting observations.

I want to get on the record a couple of points that he has made in his editorial entitled "An Industry of Despair." Not an industry of hope, not an industry of 425 new jobs—we'll see how that pans out—not an industry of economic boon to the downtown community. This is an editor of a business magazine in Windsor who says the following:

"Indeed since Churley's"—the minister; I'll substitute for her last name—"confirmation of the casino plans, Windsorites such as myself are discovering much more about the sordid underbelly of this industry...."

"'This is a hostile industry you're getting into,' warns Jim Wortman, director of the Casino Careers Institute in Atlantic City."

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This industry will bring to your city problems of a magnitude and of a type you had never imagined or envisaged. Be very wary and be very careful. As we go to the city of Windsor, it's easy to hold out the carrot and promise the world. I say to the minister that I doubt she's going to be able to deliver even a small portion of what she said she would.

There are countless other issues to talk about here. We don't have a great deal of time left, but I want to talk about one that I see as emerging that will be significantly problematic in the next few months and perhaps years ahead.

There is in the fabric of Canadian society and indeed Ontario today legitimate and very well-founded concern about our aboriginal peoples. As we went through the process, first of all of Meech Lake and subsequently of the Charlottetown accord, the Premier addressed that issue as being very much at the forefront of his deliberations and his concerns. The Minister of Environment and Energy has always been very active and very significantly involved.

The casino project has raised an issue with respect to aboriginal peoples as well. For those of my friends who are not familiar with the potential problem that lies therein—and I doubt if there are any; I'm sure that they're all aware of the potential difficulty—for some of the viewers who might be watching, let me try and summarize as briefly as I can the potential difficulty with casino legislation and our aboriginal friends.

Although the government announced that it was going to proceed with negotiating arrangements for native casinos, the government has to date failed drastically, quite frankly, to work with the province's first nations to arrive at any kind of comprehensive strategy to deal with the issue. Many of Ontario's first nations are frustrated at the government's failure to develop a comprehensive strategy to implement their request for native gaming.

I think it's not in any sense fearmongering, but simply to put on the record and to make it known that a number of bands across Ontario have already indicated their intention to proceed with casino gambling with or without the government's approval, with or without the government's control or intervention. They maintain the position that they have the right to proceed as they choose. I can tell you, if anything will spur that on, it's the construction of a casino, when they see moneys being generated and will say, "We want a piece of that action."

The government has, by its own admission, failed to negotiate any kind of comprehensive agreement or even terms of understanding to proceed with that. When you ask the minister or ask her project team people, the response is, "It's a very, very difficult issue." Indeed it is, and I don't possess the wisdom of Solomon to come

up with a suggestion on how to deal with it. But there is a serious problem, and we have seen from responses in other jurisdictions, particularly Manitoba, the difficulties that are created when a first nation band says, "We're going to go ahead and we're going to proceed and we are going to institute casino legislation."

Without the controls we have talked about, notwithstanding the best wishes and the intention of the minister, I don't, quite frankly, accept her assertion that it will be devoid of problems. I think we will have grave problems with the Windsor project in terms of organized crime, in terms of some of the difficulties, the economic impact. I don't believe the benefit they talk about will be there. I don't believe for a moment that it will generate \$325 million of spinoff benefits to the people of Windsor. As our friend says, "They're buying a package of goods that they really don't understand." It's a very hostile industry they're bringing into the city, with a whole range of inherent problems that has caused the chief of police great concern as well.

But those bands across Ontario have said they're going to go ahead. I say with, I hope, a sombre, solemn voice that will be heard by people in the government, that you're risking absolute chaos if you don't respond to the issue raised by our first nations people and work with them on this issue and come to a resolution. It's not one of those issues that I believe, as the minister would say, we can deal with after the fact. I can't put words into her mouth, but her response very well may be: "This is only a pilot project. It's only the first of many. It will give us an opportunity to iron out some of those wrinkles and to deal with the problem."

I suggest that if we don't deal with it and the spark hits the tinder on this one, we could be into some very serious difficulties. I hope the minister would work with her colleagues in government, the first minister, the Premier, and others, to work with the Attorney General, who is here, who has come in at the present time, to sit down with the first nations people and arrive at some resolution of this issue before it becomes an unhappy reality. I don't even want to speculate about what could happen, but simply let me say that I sincerely fear what could happen with our first nations if this is not resolved in an adequate fashion.

The minister has made a few interesting comments about what has been said with respect to this industry. I want to pay tribute to the member for Victoria-Haliburton, whom I hope this House gives an opportunity to be heard on this matter. I say this simply because he's extremely well read. He has perhaps done more work on this than any single member of this House, and I say this with the greatest respect to my colleague critic in the third party, the member for Parry Sound; I'm sure he's been diligent as always and has done a great deal of work on this issue. I will say—I hope I don't sound self-serving—that I too have done a significant amount

of work in reading as I prepared for this and tried to undertake my responsibilities as critic in the best way I'm able to do.

But certainly the member for Victoria-Haliburton has delved into just volumes and volumes of literature and has come up with some very interesting reading material, some of which I agree with, some of which I find to be very thought-provoking but haven't drawn any specific conclusion on. I simply say it's been very useful and provocative in terms of the process of trying to arrive at dealing with this legislation. I don't know how much time he's going to get. I hope we give him a full and fair and adequate hearing, and I hope my colleagues would find it in their heart and soul to give him a fair amount of latitude in terms of the presentation he makes. I want not to pay tribute, just to be honest and let people know I'm reading from his material and drawing from his material and acknowledge that.

The regional police chief of Peel, Chief Lunney, whom I've gotten to know personally over a number of years, has had some experience. He worked previously in Manitoba and had some experience with casinos. He said at one point in time that if you're going to proceed, bear in mind that you're going to have all kinds of problems, but if you're bound and determined to proceed in the face of those problems and somehow feel you're going to be immune from them, for heaven's sakes make sure it's completely government-run and government-controlled with no private gambling firms as partners. Notwithstanding that I take nothing away from the individuals, most if not all of whom I'm sure are honourable, decent, law-abiding people, the operation of a casino by private firms will attract and will bring with it some difficulties that may or may not be avoided if it were run by the government.

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Now, I'm not convinced of Chief Lunney's position. I'm not sure that even the government running it would eliminate those problems—in fact, I don't believe it would—but I'm prepared to talk to my friend the chief and to hear other people who would have an opinion on that, simply to say that here is a person who has had some experience, a man who is respected in law enforcement not only in the region of Peel and Ontario, but indeed across the country. He says, "I don't even agree that you should be doing it, but let me tell you right from the start that you're doing it the wrong way."

There are others. In a piece of literature, a paper that was put together in June of this year by the member for Victoria-Haliburton, he quotes Donald Trump, the owner, as we know, of three Atlantic City casinos. He quotes from the transcript of the CBC program Venture. Interesting stuff here. Let me quote a little bit of it and put it on the record for the viewing audience and for those who really are sincerely interested. He says:

"Donald Trump: 'Gaming doesn't come cheap and I have to agree with a lot of the critics on that. It brings crime. It brings prostitution. It brings a lot of things that maybe areas didn't have before.... There's a big cost to pay.... Most jurisdictions have considered gaming and most jurisdictions, even though right now it seems to be the craze...have rejected it. And the ones that have accepted it, many of them, if you gave them their choice again, they would have turned it down.'"

Do you know what? I hear and read about Karen Hall from the Windsor Star, from Alan Halberstadt, the editor of *In Business* in Windsor, and do you know what they're saying? "We've had a chance to reconsider it. We've had a chance to think through and to look at what the government promised us at the outset and what is really evolving here, and do you know what? We don't like it," and "We cringe," to quote Ms Hall, "that we supported it at one point in time."

That takes a tremendous amount of courage. There is not one of us in this place who doesn't have, and I say this with no disrespect, a fair smattering of pride, or we wouldn't be in this business. We all have a bit of ego or we wouldn't get involved in this business. I hope, and I'm virtually certain, that none of us has that as the principal motivating factor for our involvement. Most of us, from whatever political party, got involved because there are things that we believe in and contributions that we want to make, and we feel very passionately about the democratic process. We all know, as colleagues, what's involved in the work around this place and in the community, and so we believe in it.

One of the greatest things that's required in terms of leadership today is the courage to say, "Hey, I've been wrong." It's hard to do. I don't like doing it. I don't like telling my seven-year-old boy that daddy's made a mistake, because I'm proud too. I recognize that as a human weakness and one that I have in spades and that I've got to work at overcoming. But it takes a tremendous amount of courage to say, "Boy, I've made a mistake," and I hope I have the opportunity, if nothing else, to implore my colleagues to listen carefully.

I know, and I don't want to embarrass my friend from Victoria-Haliburton, that there's an awful lot of passion involved here in terms of party politics and the decision that he made, but listen to what he has to say. Listen to some of the literature that he's brought together. More importantly, listen to the people in the province of Ontario.

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): Let's let Drainville speak.

Mr McClelland: Listen to the average men and women, I say to my friend from Durham Centre. Is that correct? Listen to the people of Ontario. Mr Drainville will have an opportunity to speak and, as I said, I hope that you would hear him fully, but the people of Ontario will bring to you some very compelling arguments.

Please listen to them. Please hear what's being said.

I know the process we're going through, and I think that what the member for Welland-Thorold said was so appropriate. He said: "You know, I would have no difficulty going through this process and at least giving it a chance if I really believed that the committee hearing would have any impact."

I know, or at least I think I know—none of us knows anything for certain, but I believe—that there are six members on the NDP caucus who have some really serious concerns about this, at least six who have said that notwithstanding the party position, they're prepared to look at this and look at it honestly.

I would like to digress for a while, if I could, from the substantive arguments. I could spend a lot of time, and maybe I should, talking about the Ontario Jockey Club's concerns and the coalition that's representing the horse racing industry and the agricultural industry. They should be heard and they have some very legitimate points.

Let me talk about the issue that the minister closed with, about integrity and honesty. Boy, I wrestle with that every day. We all do. I would hope that members opposite would really listen carefully to the concerns, understand the dynamics of party politics and understand that ultimately there's something much, much more important here, and that's what the people of Ontario have to say. Hear what they say and make your judgements for yourselves.

I shared in a conversation with one of my colleagues that, in the previous government, I absented myself for a vote. In the three years that I had an opportunity to be a backbencher in government, if there's one thing I could redo, it would be to come back and redo that vote, not to disappear to the washroom for five minutes but to stand in my place and vote against. The legislation still would have passed. I don't think I would have initiated a caucus revolt of any nature. But I wasn't here and I regret it. People ask me if I have any regrets in this business, and generally speaking, no, it's been a tremendous opportunity. Given the opportunity by the people of Brampton, I hope to have a chance to do it for a number of years to come.

The fact of the matter is that a lot of you are going to wrestle with that. I know that. I know that some of you sitting here right now are going to wrestle with that when we come to third reading on Bill 8 particularly. Second reading is a bit different. Some of you are going to say: "Take a wait-and-see attitude. Wait and see what happens in committee. Maybe there's something that can be redeemed in terms of the legislation or the philosophy or the policy or some safeguards can be introduced that I can live with that will make it more palatable for me."

The appeal I would have for you is to listen carefully

and to be the judge on your own. Boy, that's tough in party politics, but I would implore you to do that.

The Ontario Agricultural and Horse Racing Coalition has come up with a number of concerns. We're running a little bit low on time, but let me just touch on a couple of the concerns they have. They make it very interesting in a letter they sent to me dated June 18, which I believe probably all members received. Paragraph 4 of their letter of that date starts out as follows:

"Let's deal with facts." What a novel idea. Let's deal with facts for a while. "No responsible government in any jurisdiction would consider such a potentially devastating move without a thorough economic impact study in advance."

What have we heard from the minister tonight? "We're doing a study. We've got some studies going and hopefully we'll see the results of those, and we'll fix things as we go."

I think the Ontario Agricultural and Horse Racing Coalition makes a very valid point. No responsible government would make such a dramatic move without first of all understanding where its going and how its going to arrive there.

Earlier, when you were in the chair, Speaker, I indicated that it was my view, I think borne out from the experience we have seen in response to questions over the past number of weeks, that the minister was charged with the responsibility to build a casino and brought together a team to that end. Having decided that they were going to build a casino, they then began to do the things that those of us who were setting out in a business enterprise or any other significant undertaking in life would do prior to making the decision. In other words, the decision was made by this government, "We will proceed." Now, having made that decision, let's figure out what some of the problems are and do the studies.

I think the point is very well taken by the coalition. Let's deal with facts. No responsible government in any jurisdiction would consider this without a thorough impact study. You know what? None was done. Only a small part of the Coopers and Lybrand effort was in fact directed to the horse racing industry.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food had a report done in September 1992. That's virtually two years less a month into the mandate of the current government. It stated the following, and I quote from this study commissioned by this government:

"Let there be no mistake, casinos would have a substantial adverse impact on Ontario racetracks and therefore on Ontario breeding and therefore on racing and breeding industry jobs and tax revenue."

We're talking about a group of people who represent 47,000 men and women employed in the industry. Twenty thousand of those people are members of the

Ontario Federation of Agriculture. These are good federation folk who have oft-times supported our friends opposite, our friends in government, and they're very gravely concerned.

I'm glad the minister's coming back in. Minister, as you return, let me repeat for the record and repeat for you what a report from one of your colleagues has said.

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Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): Don't worry, she has been hanging on every word. This is one of the great moments in provincial history.

Mr McClelland: Thank you.

"Let there be no mistake. Casinos will have a drastic impact on the horse racing industry."

As I said, I think you have an obligation, I would dare say a duty, a responsibility, to sit down and to talk with those people and discuss fully the impact your Bill 8 will have on them and give them some assurances. I want to talk a little about the industry over the course of the next few weeks and hope we might even be able to let it get its oar in the water and talk about maybe levelling the playing field. I also have a letter from the Ontario Jockey Club which provides me with a substantive amount of data and information that it wants to bring to the table. Minister, you're going to hear about that as well.

On a more general note, let me make a couple of brief references to a transcript of ABC News Nightline that was aired on May 31 of this year, just a few weeks ago. I want to quote some people in the jurisdiction—I think it's almost ironic—of Cripple Creek. Maybe they feel that way because they've got a casino now.

The minister said there's going to be tremendous economic benefit and a tremendous economic boon to the city of Windsor. Let me tell you what these people had to say:

"It has pushed out the quaint little shops we had. It discouraged many of the family-type tourists we used to have."

Another quote: "It'll change it overnight"—your community—"and it won't be the same place you fell in love with, or the same place you're used to living in," or the place where you wanted to raise your family.

Interesting comments from people who live in communities that have had casino legislation.

I could spend a great deal of time talking about the impact on various industries, but I want to go back to a couple of first principles we talked about. I'm going to conclude by going back to where I started, and that's where the minister started and where the minister concluded. She talked about honesty and integrity.

I come back to the quote of one Mr Robert Rae QC, in November 1986. "What is moral about an economic

system that feeds on greed?" asked the Premier. Again, he said it draws on what is most narrow in people but not on what is most generous in people.

I think back to what the Treasurer said. He said it was a sad, sad day when the government based its economic policy and fought its deficit by going after the most vulnerable.

There's a lot at stake here, and we've spent a lot of time; I've spent the better part of an hour and a half talking about it, and I've only begun to scratch the surface in terms of some of the substantive issues.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I'll be on tomorrow night.

Mr McClelland: And Mr Bradley, the member for St Catharines, in his inimitable fashion, with a tremendous amount of passion and vigour—which will indeed be, I say to the Minister of Environment and Energy, perhaps one of the great parliamentary moments, certainly of this session—will have an opportunity to address Bill 8 tomorrow.

Mr Bradley: I think I have 21 votes on the government side on this issue.

Mr McClelland: I want to come back to that and talk about the point my friend makes as I conclude. I know there are half a dozen, at least five or six, members over there who are really concerned about this.

Mr Bradley: Oh, more than that.

Mr McClelland: At least five or six who are truly concerned. This is an issue that gives you an opportunity to stand up and be counted in a way that demonstrates what you used to be, and that was a party of principle, not a party that seeks to look for expediency, not a party that builds an economic plan for the city of Windsor on a crumbling and false cornerstone.

Minister, I remind you that if you say to the people of Windsor that this is an economic boon to them, that you are providing this to solve their economic woes, you are providing them with an illusory bubble that will burst. I say to you again that the day you go into Windsor, Michigan will move ahead. The day you go into the Niagara Peninsula, New York will move on the 120,000 video terminals that it has and locate them right along the border.

You know very well that if you can't draw 80% of your market, 80% of your consumers for the casino, from another jurisdiction, you're buying more problems than you're benefitting. The cost in terms of the social impact on people's lives is immeasurable, but even the dollar costs will put you in a negative situation.

I remind you of what you said but a few years ago when you sat on city council and said that you would not allow a casino to be established at the CNE because of the impact it would have on the community because of the unsavoury elements it would attract and how it would take away from the CNE as family entertainment.

Minister, you were there, and you voted against it at that time. That is something only you can explain: your sudden change of heart. I would hope you would explain fully what it was that made you change your mind. I would hope that maybe the member for Rainy River would explain what changed his mind. I would hope that the Minister of Finance, the Treasury minister, the member for Nickel Belt, would explain what changed his mind so significantly over the past number of years.

Minister, Bill 8, although well intended, I'm sure, by yourself, has been fraught with mismanagement and uncertainty right from the start, and the problem is very basic. I said to you before and I say it again: You let the ship leave harbour without knowing where you were going or how you were going to get there. You've tried to patch it together. You've pulled together a good team of competent people, but you've told them their mandate is to build a casino, not to make a rational, well-thought-out decision. You haven't done the studies. You're doing them as you go along to justify your position.

As we go through committee, I know we're going to have people who are lined up by the government, as we will have people lined up in opposition, but I want you to hear them, Minister, hear them very carefully and clearly, because they're going to bring concerns to you. Listen to the people of Ontario. Listen to the people who run charities, who have contributed in an immeasurable fashion, who have woven strength into the fabric of this province by multiplying the resources we have through the volunteer network. You're putting them at jeopardy.

Don't substitute something illusory for an economic plan, something well-thought-out for the city of Windsor. Rethink this.

To the members opposite, my friends in the NDP, who know deep in their hearts that if they vote in favour of this, something they didn't believe in in the past, they're being pressured into it: Stand up and be counted. Don't just disappear. Have some principles and stand by your convictions. You'll be a better member for it, and this will be a better province because you did the right thing.

The Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Brampton North for his contribution to the debate and invite questions and/or comments.

Mr Harnick: It's interesting. There were a number of articles in the newspaper this weekend talking about industrial strategies and the fact that Ontario really didn't have an industrial strategy. The person who was writing that article obviously didn't realize that casinos were the industrial strategy of the New Democratic government.

I suspect that very few people have read the bill

itself, but the bill is very interesting. It talks about casinos, and it defines a casino as a place "kept for the purpose of playing games of chance." Now, when you talk about that definition, a place "kept for the purpose of playing games of chance," if you had ever put that proposition to someone in the New Democratic Party a year ago, two years ago, five years ago, and told them they would be in a place today voting to create places that are kept for the purpose of playing games of chance, they would have told you that you were out of your mind.

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But now this is a party that believes in games of chance, this is a party that believes in lottery schemes, because that's how it defines "games of chance." But the reality is that the games of chance they're really talking about are blackjack, roulette and slot machines. Those are the games of chance that this party believes in as the industrial strategy for the province of Ontario.

Admittedly, they will create jobs in Windsor, but at what cost? What's the cost of policing going to be? What is going to be the increase in crime? What's going to happen to the horse racing industry? What's going to happen to charities in the province of Ontario? What are the social costs going to be?

We all remember that Bob Rae talked about a tax on the poor. To think that people are going to come to this casino and enjoy the activities around Windsor is purely folly when you have the opportunity to stay in the casino and then go back to Michigan.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired. The member for Cochrane South.

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): The cameras would have to see what I'm looking at to understand why I'm laughing. It's unbelievable.

I just want to take a couple of minutes to respond to the member opposite who spoke for the last hour and a half in this House and made a number of assertions around the question of casinos. I don't have the time, unfortunately, in two minutes, to go through it, but I would like to say that a lot of the figures the member quoted to support his argument around casinos leave a little bit to be desired. There's no question that a casino in Windsor is going to attract economic development in that community.

I would agree with the member to a certain extent: Like all issues, not everybody's unanimous on the issue. Like any other political party, and just like the public, some people are for it and some people are against it.

But I want to make one thing clear. The member made the point during his hour-and-a-half deliberation on this debate that members on this side of the House are not in support of this particular policy, that when we were in opposition, way back when, we were against it. I'll tell you, those questions were asked directly to me

during the 1990 campaign. People asked me how I felt about casinos, because a group in my community of Timmins wanted to start a casino in my community. I supported it then, and I support it now.

I think casinos are not a bad idea. I think people who gamble are going to gamble anyway. As a matter of fact, I was at a riding function on Sunday in my riding, at a 50th wedding anniversary, and spoke to a number of constituents at that particular function. Three of the tables I went to, out of seven tables I talked to, all talked to me about how they had either gone to Las Vegas, to Sault, Michigan, or off to Atlantic City over the past two or three months in order to gamble.

Gambling is a fact of life; it happens in our community. If we're going to allow gambling to happen, because it happens, we may as well do it within the confines of our own province and regulate it ourselves according to our own beliefs about how it should be regulated.

I just say that the policy, unlike what the member opposite says, is supported by members of the government because we believe it's not a bad policy. It's a good idea.

Mr Drainville: I'd like to affirm the comments that have been made by the honourable member for Brampton North. He spoke about a number of issues that are very cogent and important for the House to hear. I know members on the opposite side don't want to hear these things, yet the things the member for Brampton North has said need to be reinforced.

He said there have been no impact studies done before the decision was made. That's true. There was no consultation. There was no consultation with the caucus itself; there was no consultation with anyone. The principle was established by the political élite of the New Democratic Party government, and then we were all dragged along, kicking and screaming.

In terms of the negative impact of this on charities, it is hard enough in this day and age, with the recession and the difficulties in our communities, for charities to try to find ways that they can reach out and continue to support our society. What we are doing when we set up more opportunities for state gambling is that we are cutting out the foundation of those organizations which provide us with very important fundamental services, so we end up introducing a negative impact on those charities.

Also, there will be a negative impact on the horse racing industry. I don't know whether people across the floor know this, but we have people over there who are from rural ridings. Yet the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has said straightly that this direction is the wrong direction for the government of Ontario because it's going to impact directly against those farms and those people who raise horses and also those who

provide feed for horses.

We have all of these negatives added to the social problems, added to the addiction, added to the increase in crime, added to the more money we're going to have to produce just to maintain a superstructure which basically panders to the lowest common denominator in society. The honourable member for Brampton North was right: This is a bad deal for everyone.

Mr Lessard: My friend, when he began his comments, made reference to a number of quotations from 18 years ago. I wasn't here 18 years ago, but I can tell you that things have changed a lot in the province of Ontario. Beliefs have changed, times have changed and, most importantly, the fiscal situation in the province and in the city of Windsor has changed in 18 years.

I was in the city of Windsor 18 years ago, where I was born, where I lived, where I went to school, where I still live. That was a place with a vibrant downtown where Americans used to like to come to shop, but that doesn't happen any more. It was a place with a healthy manufacturing sector that has seen tremendous job losses in the last few years.

In one of the arguments my friend makes he says, "You had better not do this, because if you do it, Detroit or New York state or Michigan is going to do it." If we use that argument, we might never try to do anything different here in the province of Ontario. I don't think that's the approach we want to take. Sometimes you have to take a gamble in this business, and this is one I'm prepared to take and become accountable for.

I'd like to know what my friend across the floor proposes to try to help the people of the city of Windsor. I haven't heard many of his ideas to hold out hope, to create jobs to diversify the economy there. Perhaps he's suggesting a project that the Liberals proposed a few years ago: The SkyDome in Toronto comes to my mind as a big tourist attraction, and that's been nothing but a huge money drain on the province of Ontario ever since it was built. This is a project that's not going to require a cent of government money to build or to operate, and I think it provides a good example of the type of project we should be involved in here in the province. We're not going to take any lessons from the Liberals as to how that should be done.

The Speaker: The member for Brampton North has up to two minutes for his reply.

Mr Bradley: Before you do, Mr Speaker, on a point of order: Each of the parties, including the one party which is independent, would have been represented in this round. There was one New Democrat, one Conservative, one independent and, I would have thought, one Liberal to make it equal. Instead we have two New Democrats and no Liberals allowed to speak on this. Is there a reason for that?

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): On the same point of order, Mr Speaker: In fairness, I think what really happened is that because the independent member was allowed the two minutes, you sort of lost the floor. I'd like unanimous consent to let the member for St Catharines have a two-minute response.

The Speaker: To the member for Carleton, I'll get to that question in a moment. To the member for St Catharines, it's always difficult to provide a balance. Four people can use up to two minutes with three parties. In this particular instance, it was evident that the independent member wished to contribute, that there was one Conservative and there were two government members, and so we utilized the four. This debate seems to have generated a considerable amount of interest among the members.

I will put the question that the member for Carleton has placed, that there be unanimous consent for the member for St Catharines to have two minutes. Agreed? I heard at least one negative voice.

The member for Brampton North has up to two minutes for his reply.

Mr McClelland: I think the negative voice speaks volumes about the spirit of collegiality that is missing in this place. I think it's indicative of the fact—and the member for Carleton made a very good point, that there's an oversight in terms of the rotation because of the independent speaking. I think most honourable members recognize it but for a few people who are a little, perhaps, shallow and narrow in their thinking, I say with respect. I just wanted to get that off my chest.

I say to my friend the member for Cochrane South that I appreciate the fact that you support this legislation. I appreciate your forthrightness and the fact that you've been upfront and candid about it from the beginning. My point, I say to M. Bisson, is simply that there are a number of your colleagues who have grave misgivings. My challenge to them is to think it through very carefully and to vote their conscience and to vote their principles.

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I say, in response to my friend the member for Windsor-Walkerville, that I understand what you're saying about fiscal realities. The comment made by the now Minister of Finance, the member for Nickel Belt, had, interestingly enough, ironically made reference to fiscal realities and said that you can't link principles with a fiscal situation. He was talking at that time about principles. Yes, the situations have changed, but you have to ask yourself a very fundamental question: Do principles change from day to day, based on the changing economies and realities of the fiscal situation in the province?

It seems to me that principles are much more fundamental than that. The policies adapt and programs adapt,

but principles are something that are very basic, and I ask you to question your rationale. Don't do it because it's being done in New York and Michigan. I never suggested such a thing. What I'm saying, and I'll say it again, is this: In the studies that you have, Minister, as we go from place to place and particularly the city of Windsor, I'm going to be asking you to provide us with a market analysis that indicates that you've considered the impact, should those jurisdictions proceed.

Minister, I ask you to listen very carefully to the debate that will follow and to the people across this province. There are some grave concerns. We'll do our best to bring them forward and I hope that you will act upon them.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired. Is there further debate?

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): I'll have the opportunity to deliver most of my remarks tomorrow, I presume, but I would like to get a couple of brief comments on the record at the outset with respect to Bill 8.

First of all, I think the government is a little paranoid. They assume that because people don't like Bill 8, they are against casino gambling. That isn't necessarily the case. I would suggest to you, Mr Speaker that there are many members of this Legislature in all three political parties who are morally against casino gambling and there are probably members of all three political parties in this Legislature who have no moral query about casino gambling per se, but who want to ensure that if it is done in this province, it is done in a thoughtful and orderly manner and that we avoid some of the pitfalls that other jurisdictions that have introduced casino gambling into their jurisdictions have fallen into. I think there are all kinds of examples out there, especially in North America, that we can learn from.

The minister indicates that she will enjoy heckling me throughout the 90 minutes. That's her prerogative. I would say to the minister that if she's a little disconcerted about heckling that she receives during question period, that's the nature of this place. It's always been thus. That's what question period is all about. For my part, I don't heckle unless I see a minister going off on a tangent, deliberately trying not to answer the question, but answering some other question.

Hon Allan Pilkey (Minister without Portfolio in Municipal Affairs): Your nose is growing.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Eves: I don't have to go back any further than this very afternoon's Instant Hansard to get a perfect example of ministers not answering the question that is asked.

Hon Ms Churley: You don't listen, Ernie. You never hear the answers.

Mr Eves: I will read to you my question and I will read to you the minister's answer. Would you please interrupt when you tell me that she's directly answering the question, yes or no.

"My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations with respect to the issue of casino gambling. Prior to September 1990, when the last provincial election was held"—just a coincidence—"the Premier of the province is quoted as saying, 'The casino plays on greed.'"

"On May 17 of this year, my leader asked the Premier if your government would hold a referendum on whether or not casino gambling should be introduced into the province of Ontario. The Premier said no." The Premier knows how to answer a question.

"When a government turns its back on the very principles and reasons it was elected to power, should not that government give the public an opportunity to express its opinion?" I think that's a fairly simple, straightforward question. The Premier thought it was. He said no.

I asked the minister the same question. Here's her answer. Is it yes or no? "I believe the Premier has said, and I certainly have said, that no casino would go into any community which did not demonstrate its wishes for a casino to be in that community."

I used to think that Bill Davis had some legalese that he spun around without answering a question, but I can tell you that that answer says absolutely nothing. It is verbal gobbledegook. It doesn't address the question that was asked. The question that was asked is, are you in favour of a referendum, seeing as how you've totally changed your principles as a political party with respect to your stand on casino gambling? Before September 1990, the NDP is on record, and we have numerous members' quotes here about being on record, against casino gambling, and after the election, when they need money and Floyd says, "Please send money, please somebody think up some ways to get me more money," somebody has a brainwave and says: "Hey, let's create a casino. We can make \$150 million a year minimum." All of a sudden, principles out the window, cash in the pocket, we have no principles.

Hon Ms Churley: The mayor's going to write you a letter again.

Mr Eves: The mayor can write me as many letters as he wants. As a matter of fact, I'm glad the minister brought that issue up, because on July 6, the day that an article appeared in the Windsor Star with respect to some comments I had made, and indeed the minister had made, about the city of Windsor, I had quite a lengthy talk with Mayor Hurst of the city of Windsor, who, by the way, the minister might be interested in knowing, agreed that every single question I had raised in the Legislature on this issue was a viable one and

was a concern that should be thoroughly addressed by the province of Ontario. We are trying to get answers to these questions, but we're getting verbal gobbledegook instead of direct answers, and that's why we have a problem.

Other NDP notables have said about casino gambling and gambling per se in the past: On June 8, 1971, Ian Deans, NDP, then member for Wentworth, "I hope the government never gets to the point of running lotteries to subsidize the consolidated revenue fund."

Floyd Laughren, February 4, 1975:

"The principle of lotteries, Mr Speaker, rests quite easily with me as long as the funds are being used for the delivery of marginal services and not essential services in the province. That's the responsibility of taxation. I would hope that the government doesn't get into the position of using lottery funds to bail it out of fiscal deficits and so forth or for essential services. That truly would be offensive."

Mr Stockwell: Who said that?

Mr Eves: The Minister of Finance said it in 1975.

On May 29, 1990, Mr Laughren said:

"I think the reason we collectively feel that way and have ever since 1975 is that lotteries are a game of chance. They are an extremely volatile source of revenue. With all the individual lottery games, any one game does not last a long time and they have to keep changing them and so forth. I think most people felt right from the beginning that essential services in Ontario should not depend upon lottery profits. There seemed to be a consensus from the beginning that this was the case and that lottery profits should go toward such things as sports, culture and recreation, where there is a discretionary aspect to the allocation of the amount of funds."

Lastly, but not least, I would like to refer to remarks made by the current member in the Legislature for Cambridge, who again has been reinstated into cabinet, who said on May 30, 1990:

"What I have attempted to provide is an assortment of views put forward by elected members of the CCF and the NDP in the federal and provincial parliaments. All of the citations mentioned show considerable concern about the negative effects of gambling on society. Many of the citations are totally and absolutely against the state's involvement in setting up gambling as a means of generating income for the provision of core government programs. This anti-gambling approach has been the basic thrust of our political movement since it was founded in the Depression years."

Where are your principles now, I ask you members sitting over there? You just throw them all out the window because we need 140 million bucks. "Principles for sale: 140 million bucks. That's our price." My position is let the people decide, and you say you don't

want to let the people decide. You're neither new nor democratic.

I repeat what I said this afternoon: I do not know why the minister steadfastly refuses to answer this very direct question of what she has against democracy, what she has against the people in the province of Ontario deciding whether they want casino gambling or not.

This afternoon, as I did before, I rhymed off numerous jurisdictions in the United States of America, some of which have casino gambling, some of which do not. But in fairness to those jurisdictions, at least they had enough class and enough respect for the democratic principle to put it to their people, to let the people decide whether they wanted to impose casino gambling on them or not. I can't say the same for the current government in Ontario.

The minister said, in response to a question this afternoon, that referendums were part of the American way, not part of the Canadian way. Would you mind telling me what your Premier and I did spending months upon months in the Constitution referendum debate? What were you taking part in that debate for if referendums aren't part of Canadian society?

It being 8:30 of the clock, I will continue this discussion with the minister tomorrow afternoon.

The Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Parry Sound for breaking his remarks at this particular point. By agreement of the House, this House now stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 2032.

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